STAR WARS®

OMNIBUS

X-WING ROGUE SQUADRON

VOLUME 2

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DARK HORSE BOOKS™

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This volume collects the stories from the *Star Wars: X-Wing—Rogue Squadron Special*, and from issues #9-20 of the series *Star Wars: X-Wing—Rogue Squadron*, encompassing the stories "Battleground: Tatooine," "Warrior Princess," and "Requiem for a Rogue," all originally published by Dark Horse Comics.

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FOREWORD

I should have known the minute Mike Stackpole was invited into the *Star Wars* universe that there was going to be trouble.

I first met Mike briefly at Coastcon in 1993, but I didn't really start getting to know him until Hurricon a year later when we had dinner with a mutual acquaintance. (I think they let me buy, but I could be mistaken.) He seemed a pleasant enough fellow, though I freely admit to a slight resentment that his convention stories were so much better than mine.

Mike was no stranger to the world of science fiction, of course. He'd been writing in the sci-fi game field since 1978, turning out game modules, rulebooks, and the occasional short story. He had also begun to branch out into novels, defining for the world just what a proper Battletech book should be. He would continue on considerably in that direction, both in other shared universes as well as creating his own original work. But that's getting ahead of things.

I ran into him off and on after that at various conventions, with our interactions staying mostly on the hi-how-are-you-what-are-you-working-on-these-days sort of level. Sometimes we grabbed lunch together. Often—not always—I let him buy.

And then in 1995, out of the blue, I picked up the phone and there was Mike. It seemed he'd just been contracted to write a series of *Star Wars X-Wing* books for Bantam and wanted to discuss the Rogue Squadron group I'd created for my own *Star Wars* books. He explained the basic story line and time frame he had in mind, and I provided what feedback I could about the squadron and the political/military situation that existed during that period. He thanked me, hung up, and settled down to write.

There is one view—I don't know how widely held—that the various *Star Wars* novelists are rather like an exclusive, genteel sort of private club. Following that analogy, you might say that Mike's arrival into the club was with a whooping cannonball into the pool. Here came the hotshot pilots of Rogue Squadron: brash, cocky, sometimes argumentative, often loud. (Yes, I know that Han and Chewie were also loud; but this was a different kind of loud.)

I suppose I assumed that my involvement with this project was now over. How little I knew. Barely had the first *X-Wing* book hit the stands when Mike was on the phone again, this time asking if he could use the character Talon Karrde in one of his upcoming books. We discussed the scene he had in mind and Karrde's likely behavior under the particular circumstances, and I gave him the okay.

Not that he needed my permission to use Karrde if he wanted to, you understand. Everything I or anyone else had contributed to the *Star Wars* saga was owned by Lucasfilm, and, as a new member of the club Mike automatically had full and open access to the complete grab bag. His call to me was simply a matter of professional courtesy, combined with the equally professional attitude of wanting to do the best job he could with every aspect of his books.

At any rate, he promised to send me a copy of the chapter when it was done, and in due course it arrived.

Frankly, I was surprised. Very pleasantly surprised. Out of the several pages

he'd written Karrde into, I found maybe three words I thought should be changed. Three words. Clearly, Mike had a pretty good grasp of my characters.

I soon had a chance to try things in the opposite direction. I was contracted to write one more *Star Wars* book for Bantam (which eventually grew into two books, but that's a different story), and as I finished the outline and started to work, I gave Mike a call to make sure our plots weren't going to step on each other's toes. Midway through the conversation, I suddenly realized that something he was planning to do with Booster Terrik would mesh perfectly with a plot point I already had written into my outline. I pointed this out and suggested the connection, got his enthusiastic approval to add Booster to my story, and sent him the chapter when it was done. He asked for changes in about—you guessed it—three words, and the process of throwing multiple links between our books had begun.

Eventually, it fell into an almost predictable routine. One of us would call the other with a five-minute question about something he was doing; and by the time we hung up the phone—usually an hour or so later—we had found another link or two we could set up. Eventually, Mike added Mara Jade and Winter to his roster of crossover characters; I returned the favor by working Corran Horn and Mirax into mine.

He finished his books, and once again, I assumed my involvement with his project was over. Again, how little I knew. For here came Dark Horse Comics and a brand new series of *X-Wing* comics. Before long, naturally, Mike was busy doing the stories for them.

And once again, we were back into the old routine. One of us would call the other to discuss conventions or signings or just basic news from the Outer Rim of the publishing world (we'd branched out beyond mere plot points by now), and he would tell me what he was planning to do and add it to my growing story development. Sometimes the link wasn't quite perfect, and we'd spend another half hour coming up with a way to tweak it so that it would work for both of our story lines.

Somewhere along the way, Mike was offered two more *Star Wars* books, one of them another *X-Wing* adventure and the other a so-called "mainstream" *Star Wars* book. More phone calls, more links. Some of them, in fact, we batted around so much that it's hard for me to remember which of us had the original idea in the first place.

Oh, and the trouble I mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, the trouble I should have known was coming? You'll find plenty of it here in this volume. Trouble for Wedge, trouble for Rogue Squadron, trouble for the whole New Republic. Creating trouble, you see, is yet another of those things Mike does so well.

But don't take my word for it. Turn to where the story starts, prepare yourself for the frantic roller-coaster world of *Rogue Squadron*, and dive on in. And enjoy.

Oh, and, Mike—next time, lunch is on me.

—TIMOTHY ZAHN

The fighter squadrons of the Rebel Alliance were the home units of many great heroes in the battles against Palpatine's Galactic Empire, and none were more renown than the pilots of Rogue Squadron. But it was after the turning point of the Battle of Endor when the Rogues, under the leadership of Wedge Antilles, proved their true importance to the New Republic.

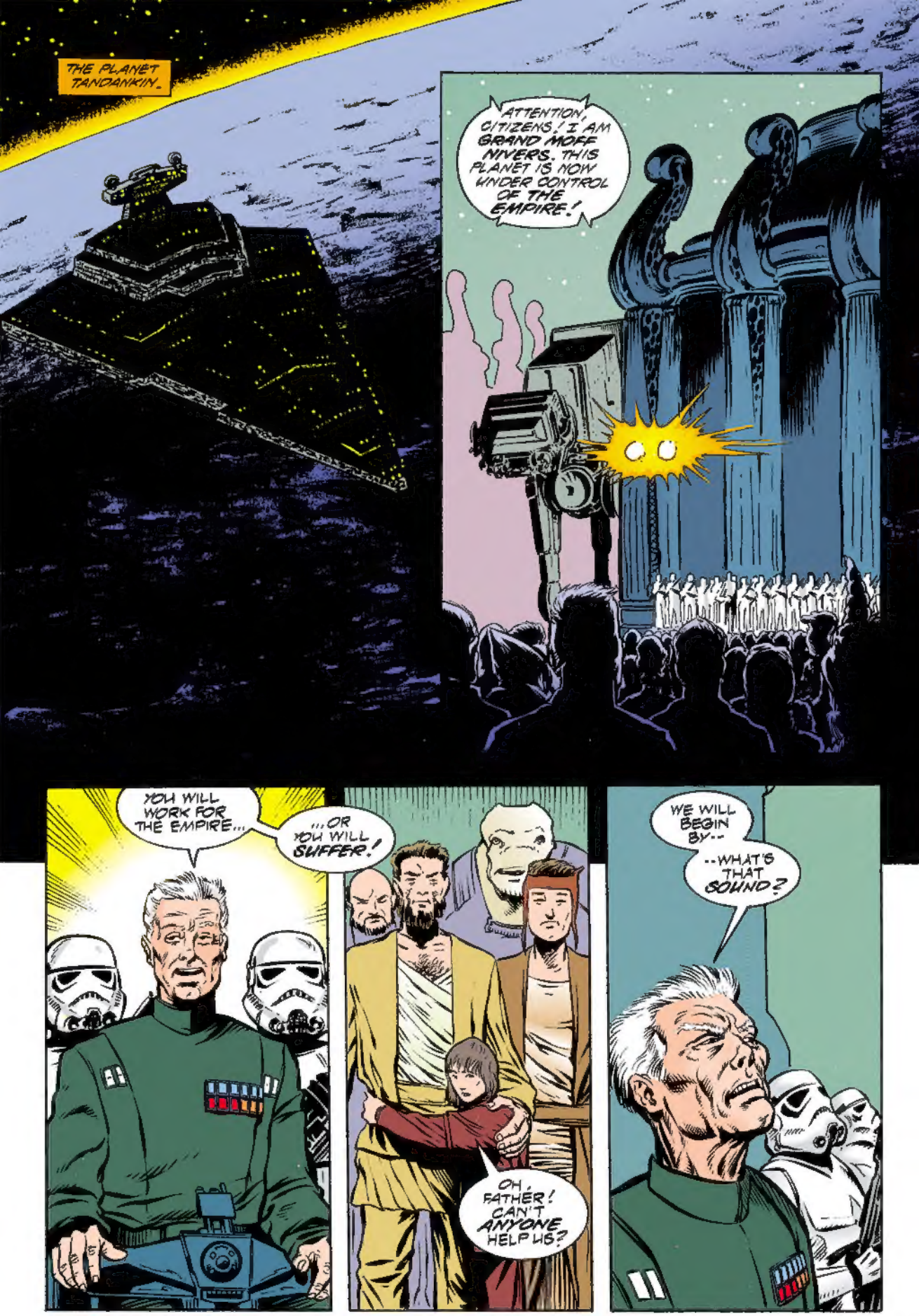
With an assortment of different fighter craft, and an ever-changing roster of pilots, Rogue Squadron was instrumental in keeping the Imperial remnants in check and allowing the fledgling New Republic the time it needed to solidify its political and military base.

Here are the Rogues' stories . . .

X-Wing Rogue Squadron Special | illustration by Mark Harrison

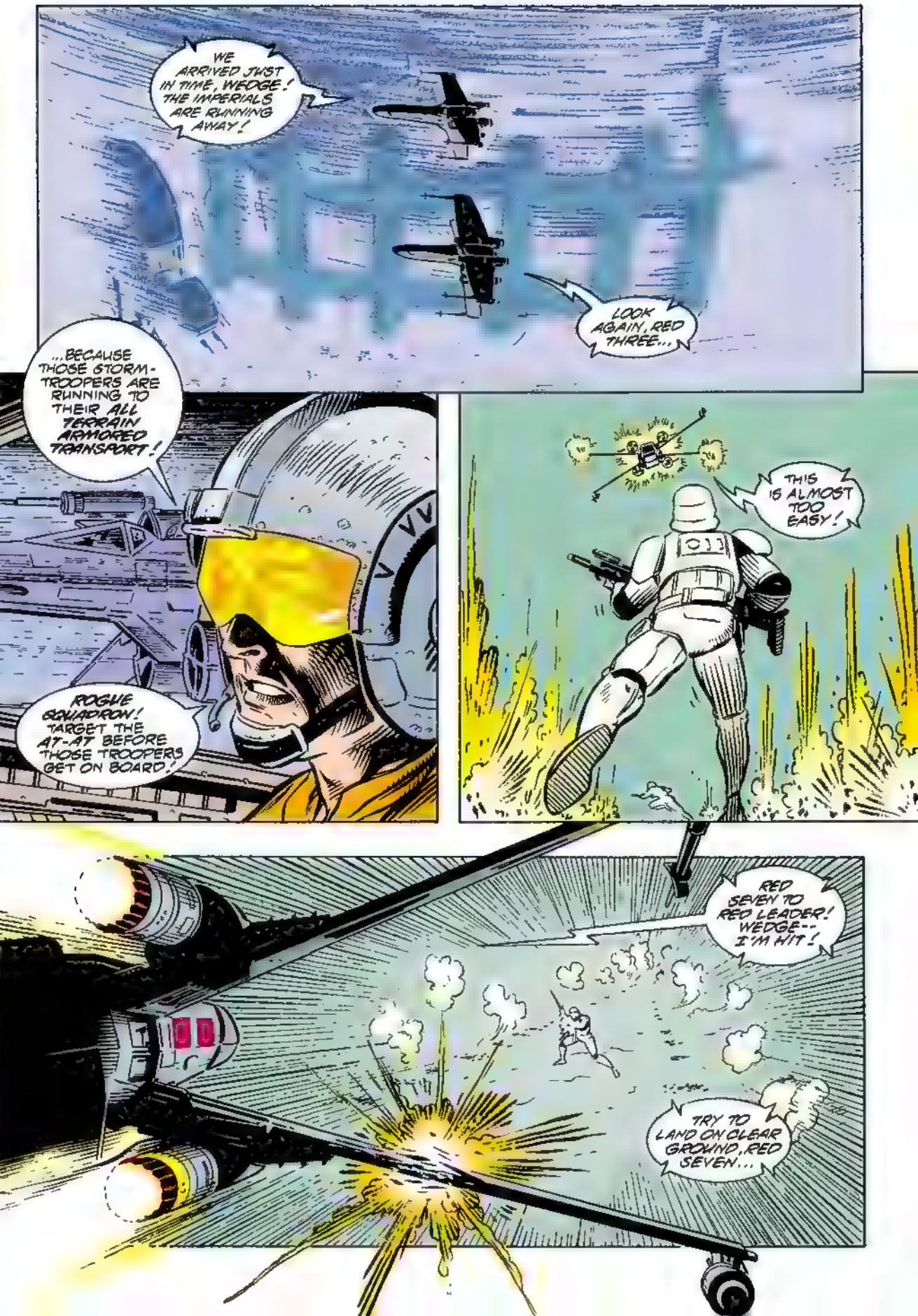
A FEW WEEKS AFTER THE BATTLE OF ENDOR . . .

script by Ryder Windham
pencils by John Nadeau
inks by Monty Sheldon
colors by Cary Porter
letters by Steve Dutro

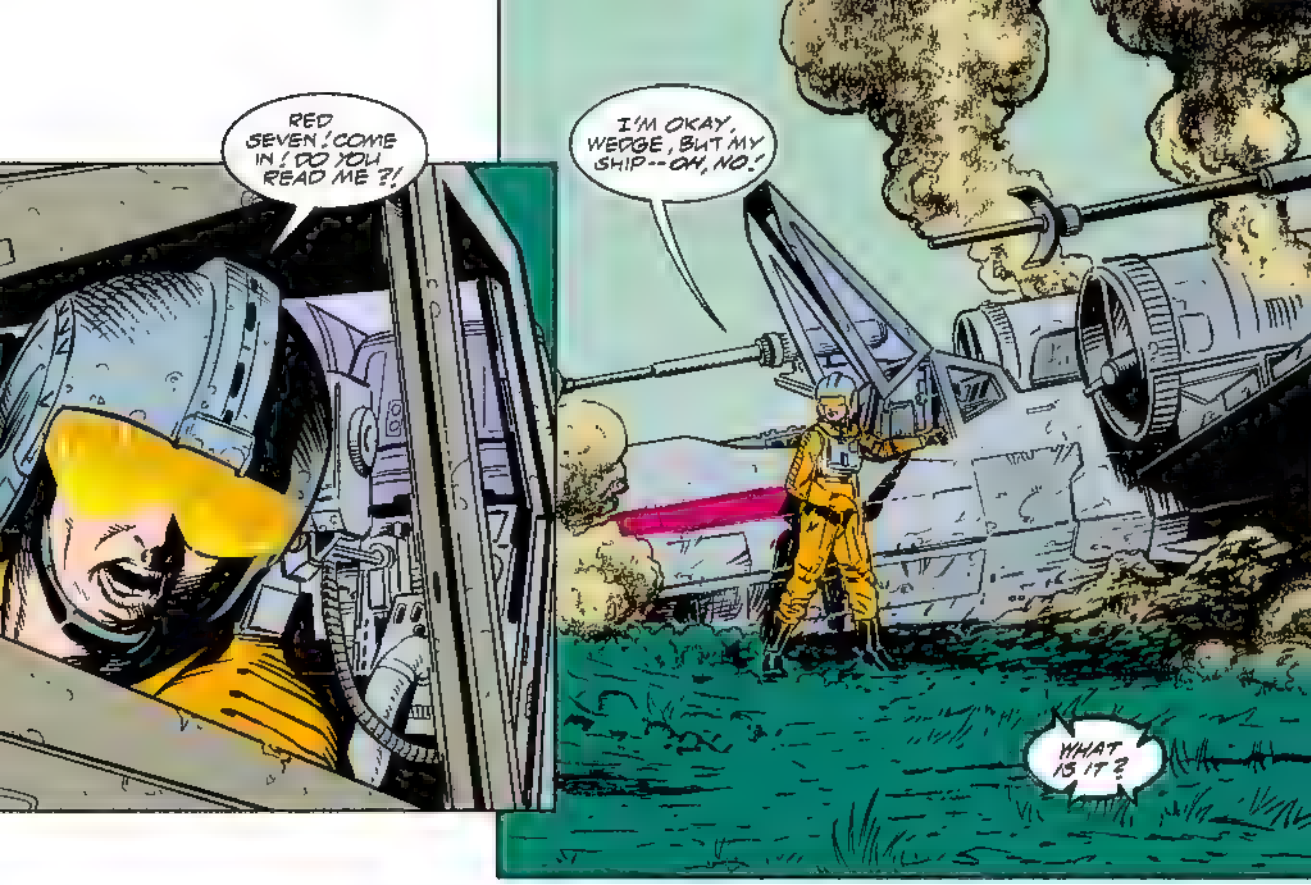

THE PLANET TANDANKIN.
ATTENTION, CITIZENS! I AM GRAND MOFF NIVERS. THIS PLANET IS NOW UNDER CONTROL OF THE EMPIRE!
YOU WILL WORK FOR THE EMPIRE...
...OR YOU WILL SUFFER!
OH, FATHER! CAN'T ANYONE HELP US?
WE WILL BEGIN BY--
--WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

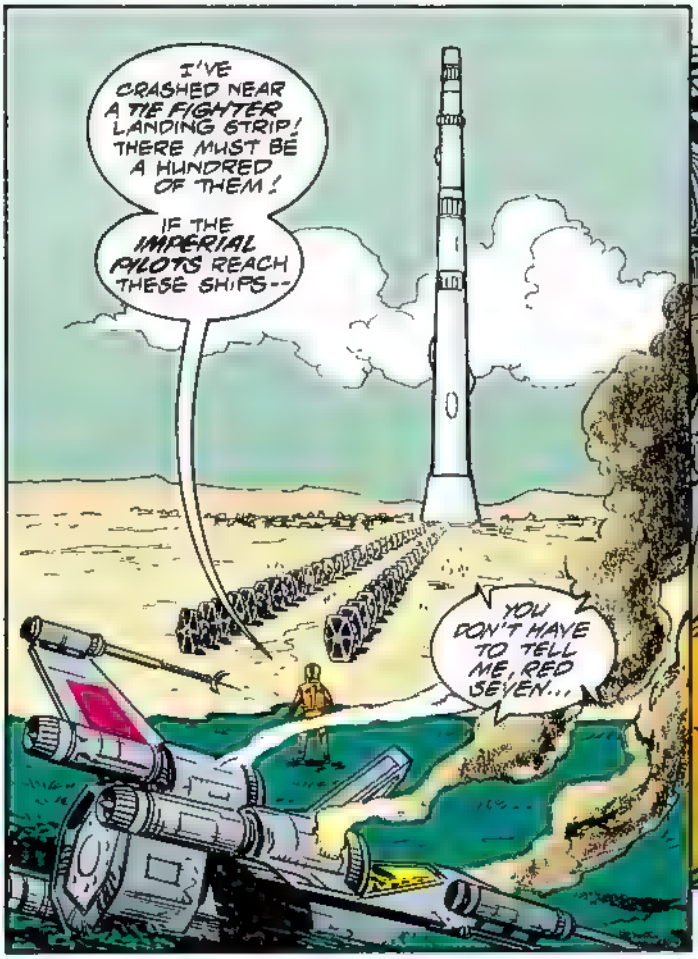
BLAST! HOW DID THOSE X-WINGS GET BY OUR STAR DESTROYER?!

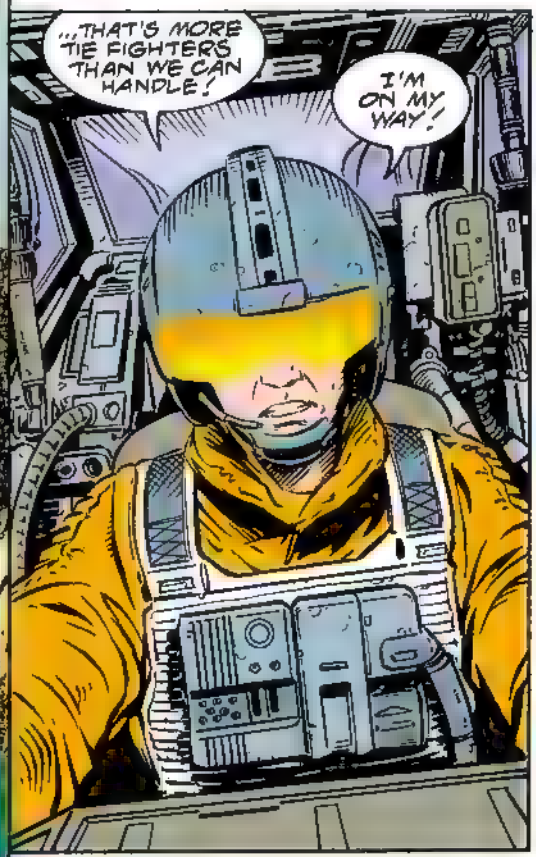
HOORAY! IT'S ROGUE SQUADRON!

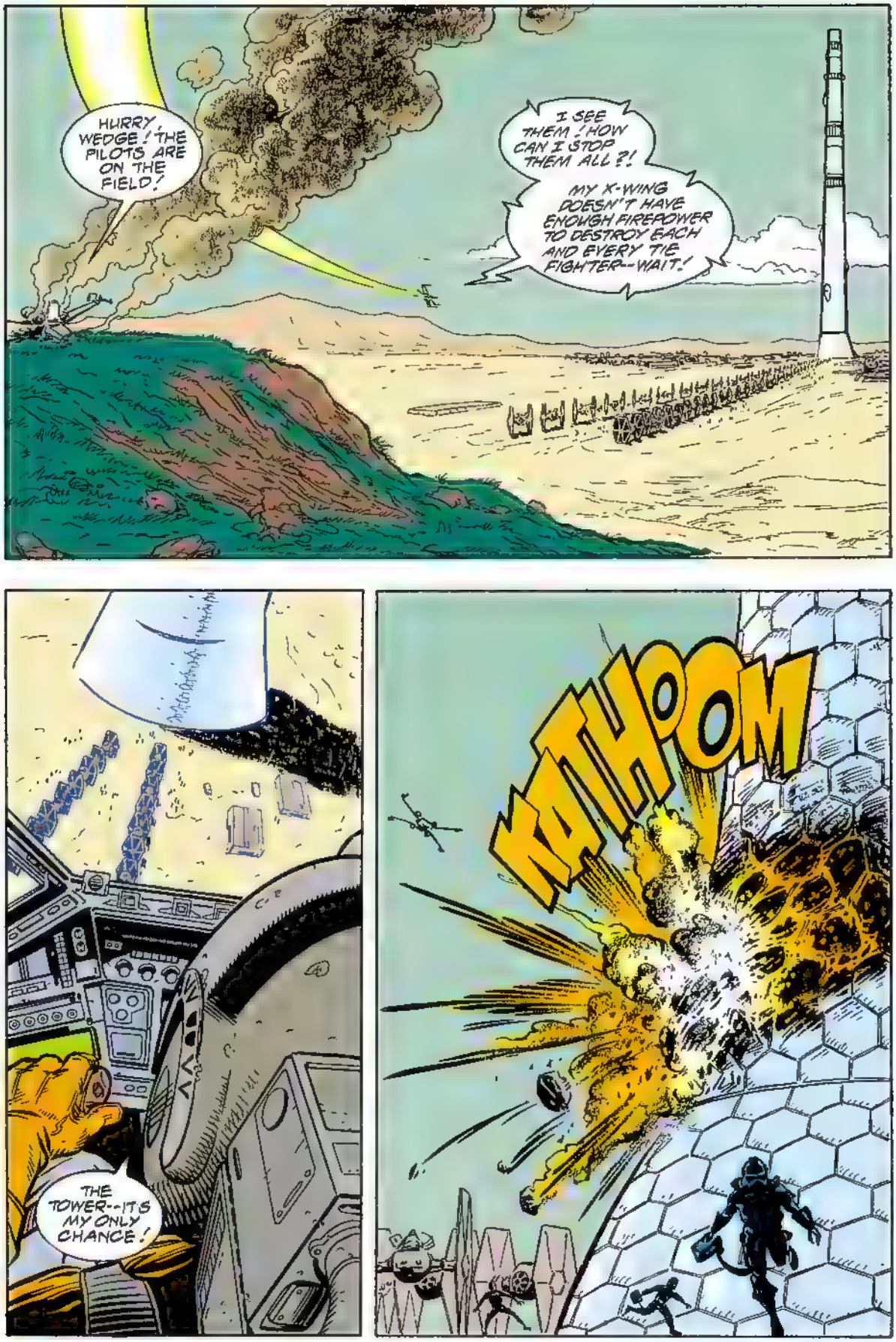

WE ARRIVED JUST IN TIME, WEDGE! THE IMPERIALS ARE RUNNING AWAY!
LOOK AGAIN, RED THREE...
...BECAUSE THOSE STORM-TROOPERS ARE RUNNING TO THEIR ALL TERRAIN ARMORED TRANSPORT!
ROGUE SQUADRON! TARGET THE AT-AT BEFORE THOSE TROOPERS GET ON BOARD!
THIS IS ALMOST TOO EASY!
RED SEVEN TO RED LEADER! WEDGE-- I'M HIT!
TRY TO LAND ON CLEAR GROUND, RED SEVEN...

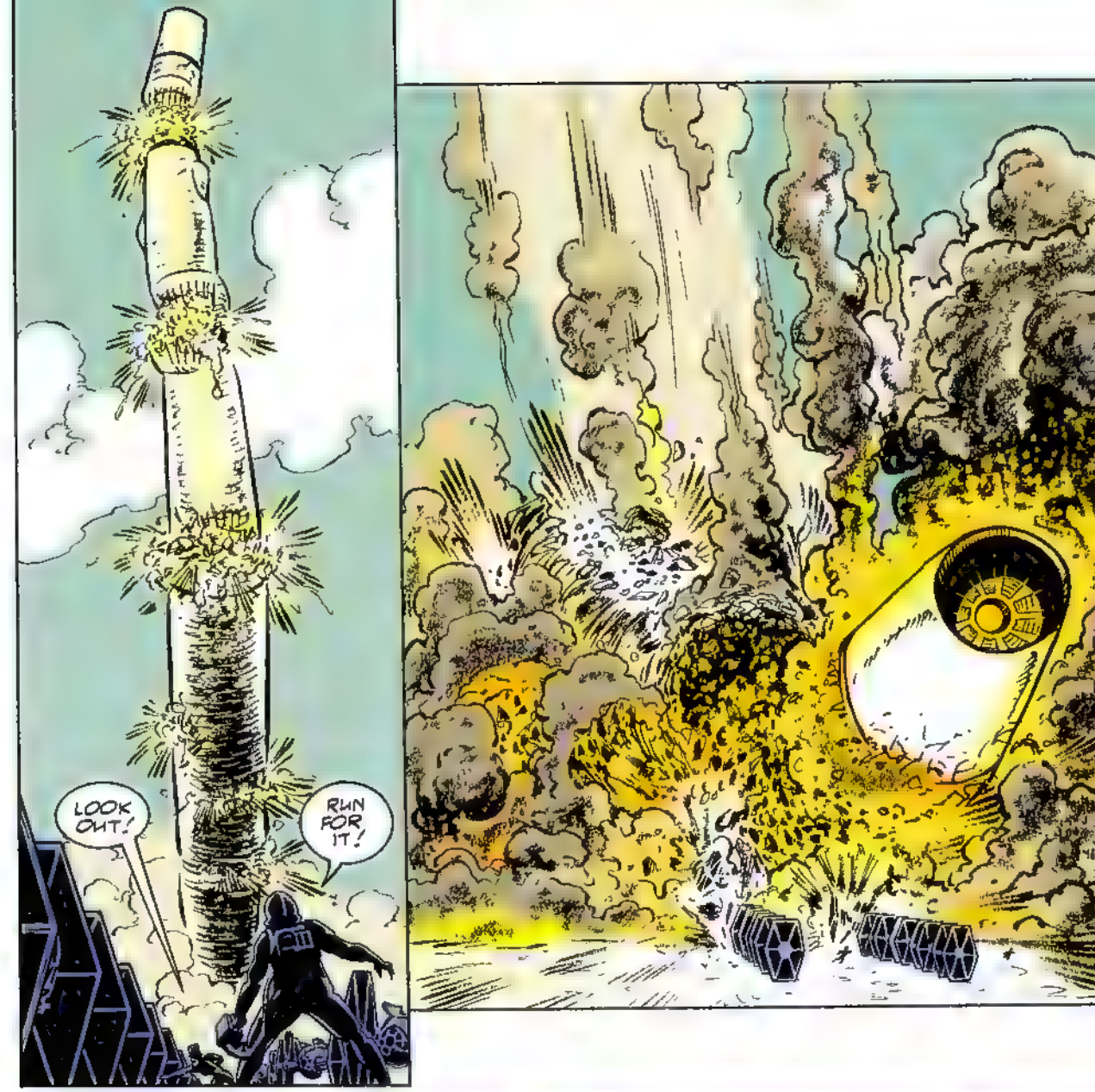
... AND I'LL TAKE CARE OF THAT TRIGGER-HAPPY STORMTROOPER!
WOW! THAT'S SOME FANCY SHOOTING, RED LEADER!
POOM!
CUT THE CHATTER, RED THREE!
RED SEVEN! WHERE ARE YOU?
MY THRUSTERS ARE FRIED, WEDGE! I'M AIMING FOR A SMALL FIELD, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING TO--
KRASSH!


RED SEVEN! COME IN! DO YOU READ ME?!
I'M OKAY, WEDGE, BUT MY SHIP--OH, NO!
WHAT IS IT?

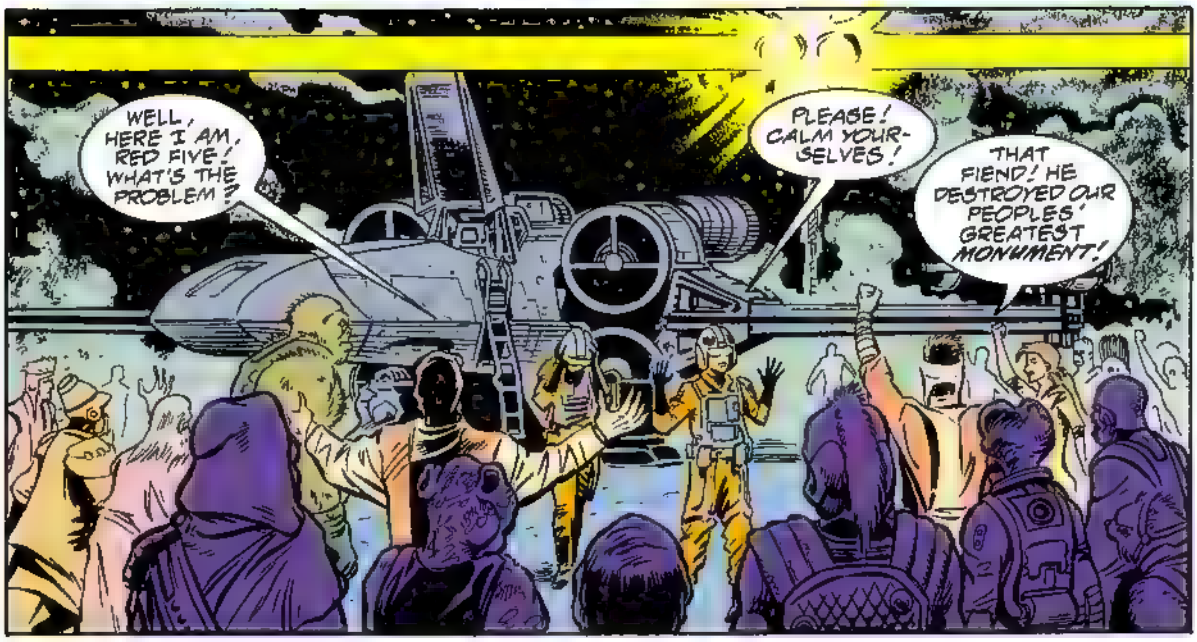

I'VE CRASHED NEAR A TIE FIGHTER LANDING STRIP! THERE MUST BE A HUNDRED OF THEM!
IF THE IMPERIAL PILOTS REACH THESE SHIPS--
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME, RED SEVEN...

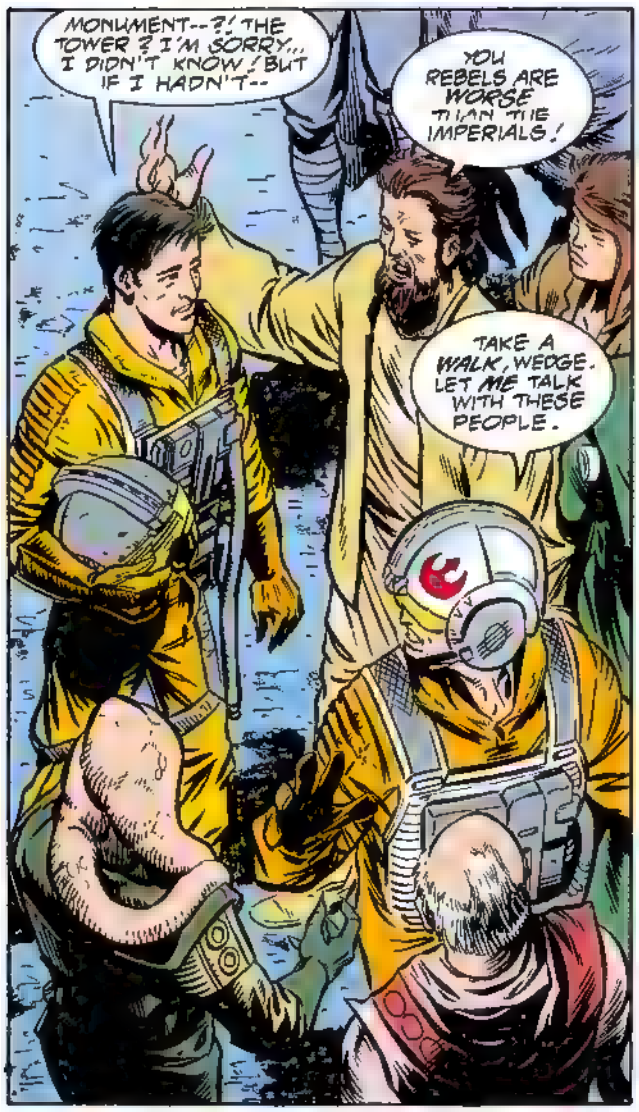

...THAT'S MORE TIE FIGHTERS THAN WE CAN HANDLE!
I'M ON MY WAY!


HURRY, WEDGE! THE PILOTS ARE ON THE FIELD!
I SEE THEM! HOW CAN I STOP THEM ALL?!
MY X-WING DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH FIREPOWER TO DESTROY EACH AND EVERY TIE FIGHTER--WAIT!
THE TOWER--IT'S MY ONLY CHANCE!
KA-HOOM

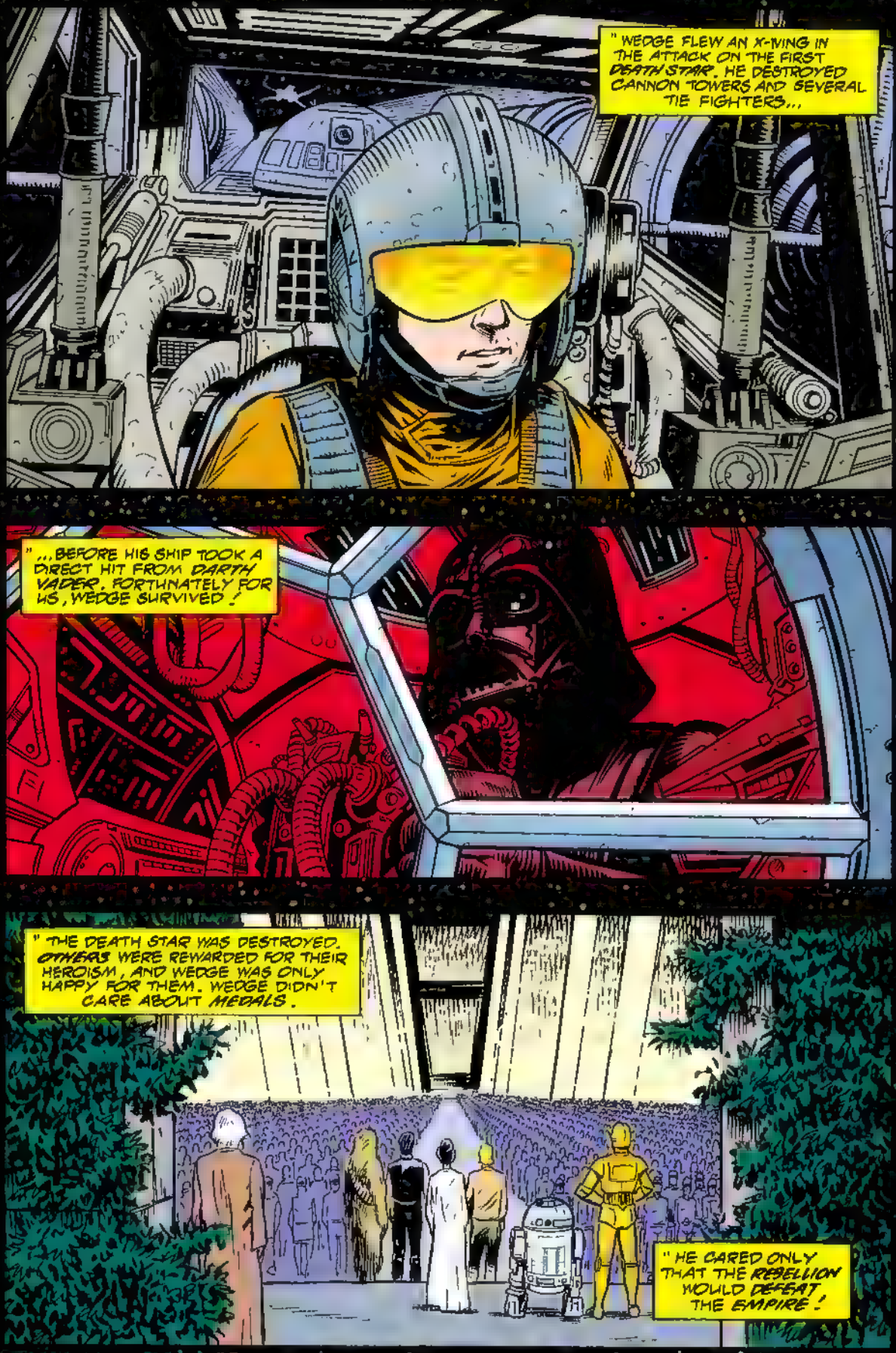

LOOK OUT!
RUN FOR IT!

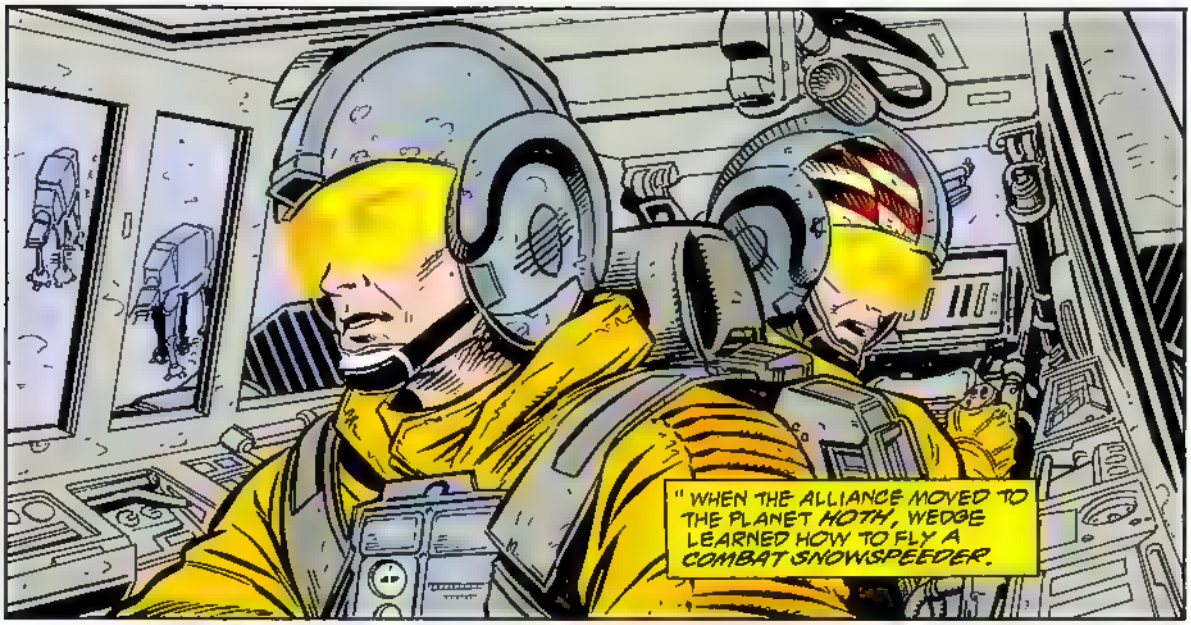
RED LEADER! WE'VE CAPTURED GRAND MOFF NIVERS AND ROUNDED UP THE IMPERIALS, BUT... THE CITIZENS DON'T SEEM TOO PLEASED!
WHAT?! HANG ON, I'M COMING IN FOR A LANDING!

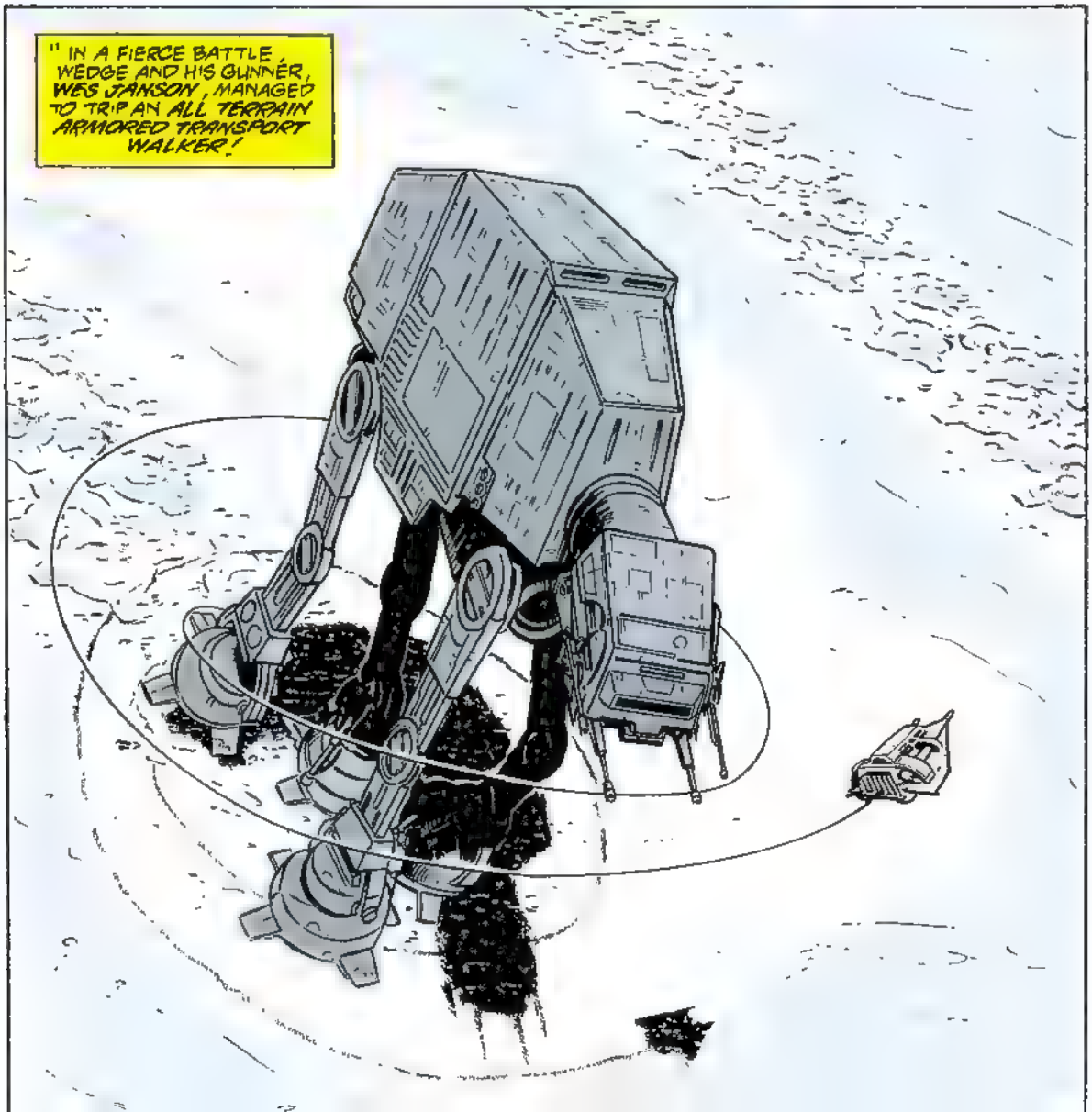

WELL, HERE I AM, RED FIVE! WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
PLEASE! CALM YOURSELVES!
THAT FIEND! HE DESTROYED OUR PEOPLES' GREATEST MONUMENT!


MONUMENT--?! THE TOWER? I'M SORRY... I DIDN'T KNOW! BUT IF I HADN'T--
YOU REBELS ARE WORSE THAN THE IMPERIALS!
TAKE A WALK, WEDGE. LET ME TALK WITH THESE PEOPLE.

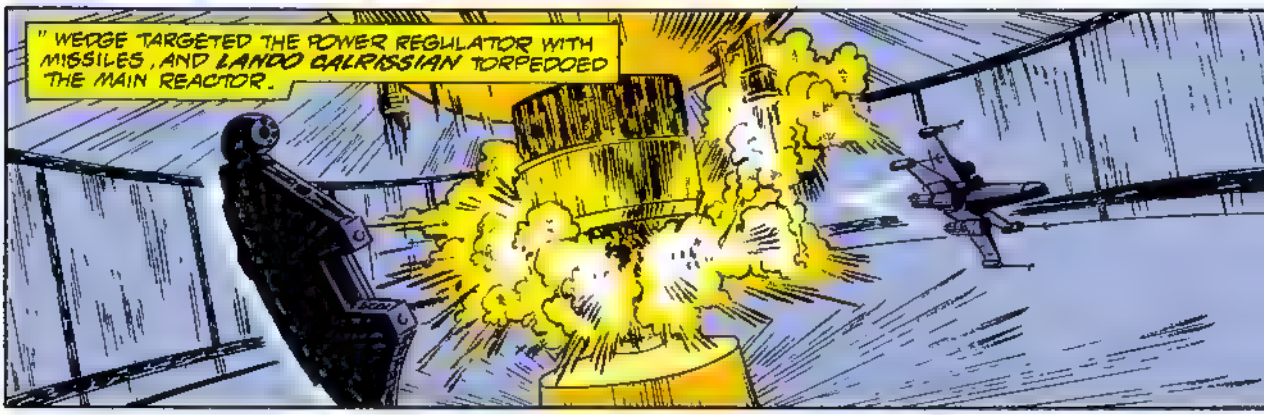
CITIZENS OF TANDANKIN! YOU SHOULD KNOW A FEW THINGS ABOUT WEDGE ANTILLES...

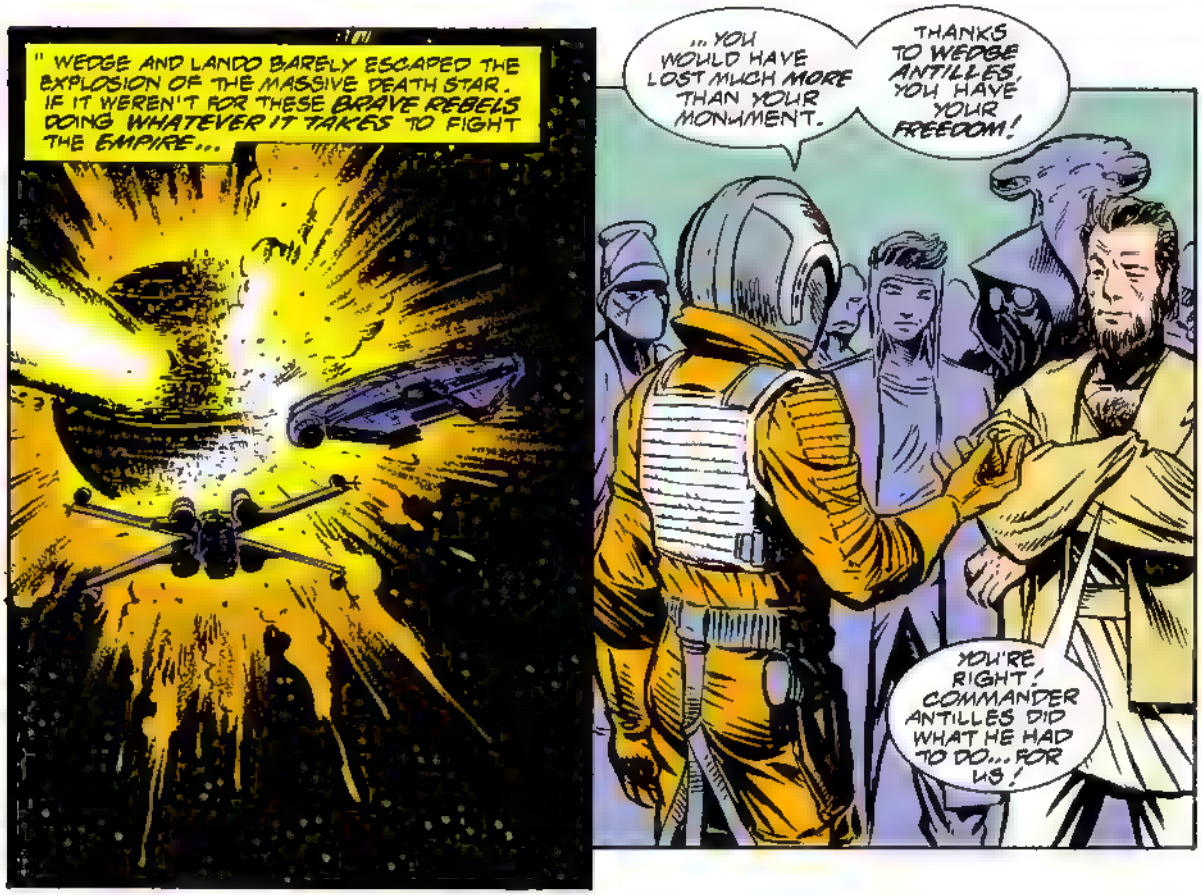

" WEDGE FLEW AN X-WING IN THE ATTACK ON THE FIRST DEATH STAR. HE DESTROYED CANNON TOWERS AND SEVERAL TIE FIGHTERS...
"...BEFORE HIS SHIP TOOK A DIRECT HIT FROM DARTH VADER. FORTUNATELY FOR US, WEDGE SURVIVED!
" THE DEATH STAR WAS DESTROYED. OTHERS WERE REWARDED FOR THEIR HEROISM, AND WEDGE WAS ONLY HAPPY FOR THEM. WEDGE DIDN'T CARE ABOUT MEDALS.
" HE CARED ONLY THAT THE REBELLION WOULD DEFEAT THE EMPIRE!

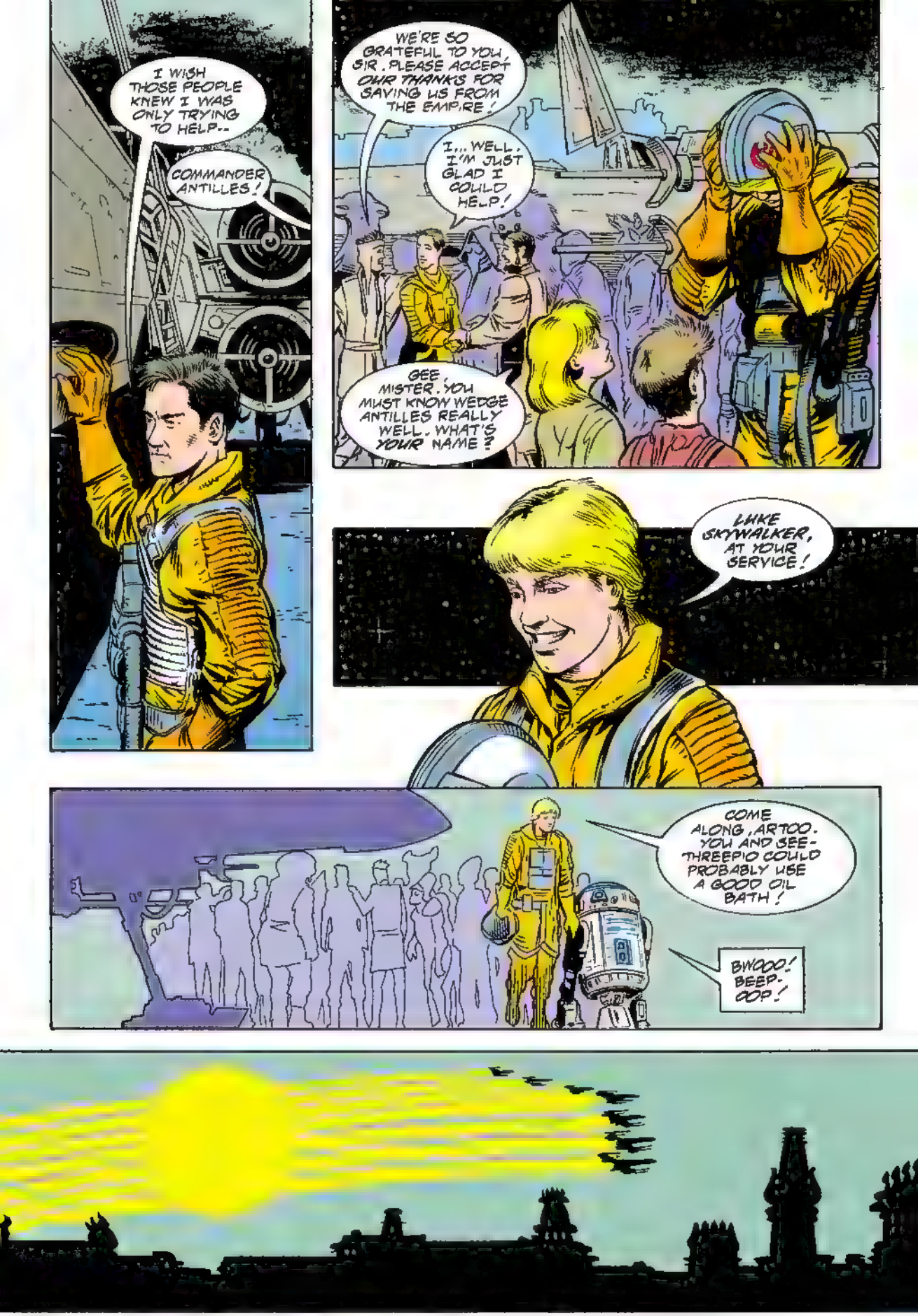

" WHEN THE ALLIANCE MOVED TO THE PLANET HOTH, WEDGE LEARNED HOW TO FLY A COMBAT SNOWSPEEDER.


" IN A FIERCE BATTLE, WEDGE AND HIS GUNNER, WES JANSON, MANAGED TO TRIP AN ALL TERRAIN ARMORED TRANSPORT WALKER!

" WEDGE WAS PROMOTED TO COMMANDER, AND HIS X-WING LED THE MILLENNIUM FALCON INTO THE SECOND DEATH STAR!


" WEDGE TARGETED THE POWER REGULATOR WITH MISSILES, AND LANDO CALRISSIAN TORPEDOED THE MAIN REACTOR.


" WEDGE AND LANDO BARELY ESCAPED THE EXPLOSION OF THE MASSIVE DEATH STAR. IF IT WEREN'T FOR THESE BRAVE REBELS DOING WHATEVER IT TAKES TO FIGHT THE EMPIRE...
... YOU WOULD HAVE LOST MUCH MORE THAN YOUR MONUMENT.
THANKS TO WEDGE ANTILLES, YOU HAVE YOUR FREEDOM!
YOU'RE RIGHT. COMMANDER ANTILLES DID WHAT HE HAD TO DO... FOR US!


I WISH THOSE PEOPLE KNEW I WAS ONLY TRYING TO HELP--
COMMANDER ANTILLES!
WE'RE SO GRATEFUL TO YOU, SIR. PLEASE ACCEPT OUR THANKS FOR SAVING US FROM THE EMPIRE!
I... WELL, I'M JUST GLAD I COULD HELP!
GEE, MISTER. YOU MUST KNOW WEDGE ANTILLES REALLY WELL. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
LUKE SKYWALKER, AT YOUR SERVICE!
COME ALONG, ARTOO. YOU AND SEE-THREEPIO COULD PROBABLY USE A GOOD OIL BATH!
BWOOO! BEEP-OOP!

Approximately six months after the Battle of Endor . . .

script by Jan Strnad

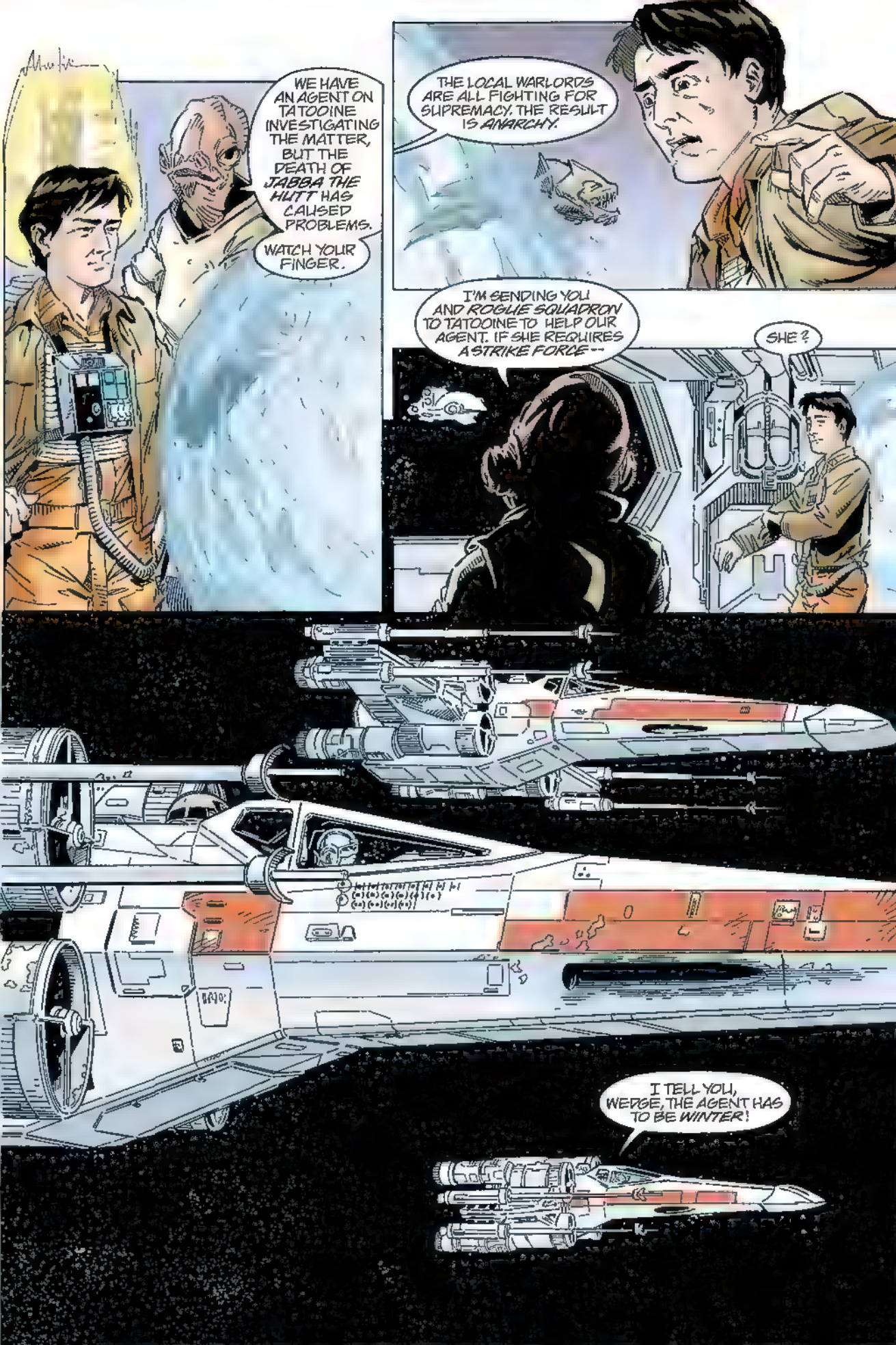
pencils by John Nadeau

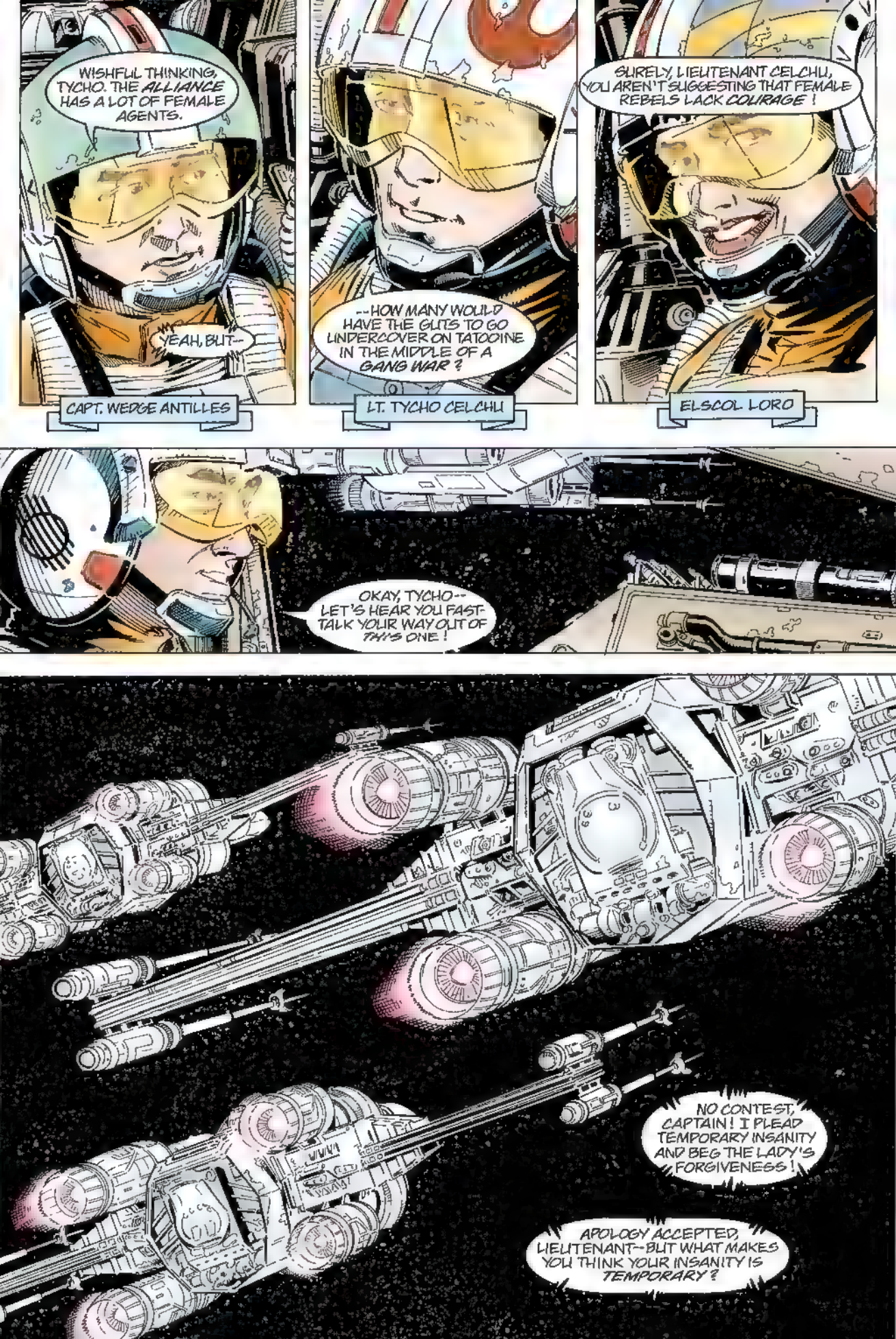
inks by Jordi Ensign

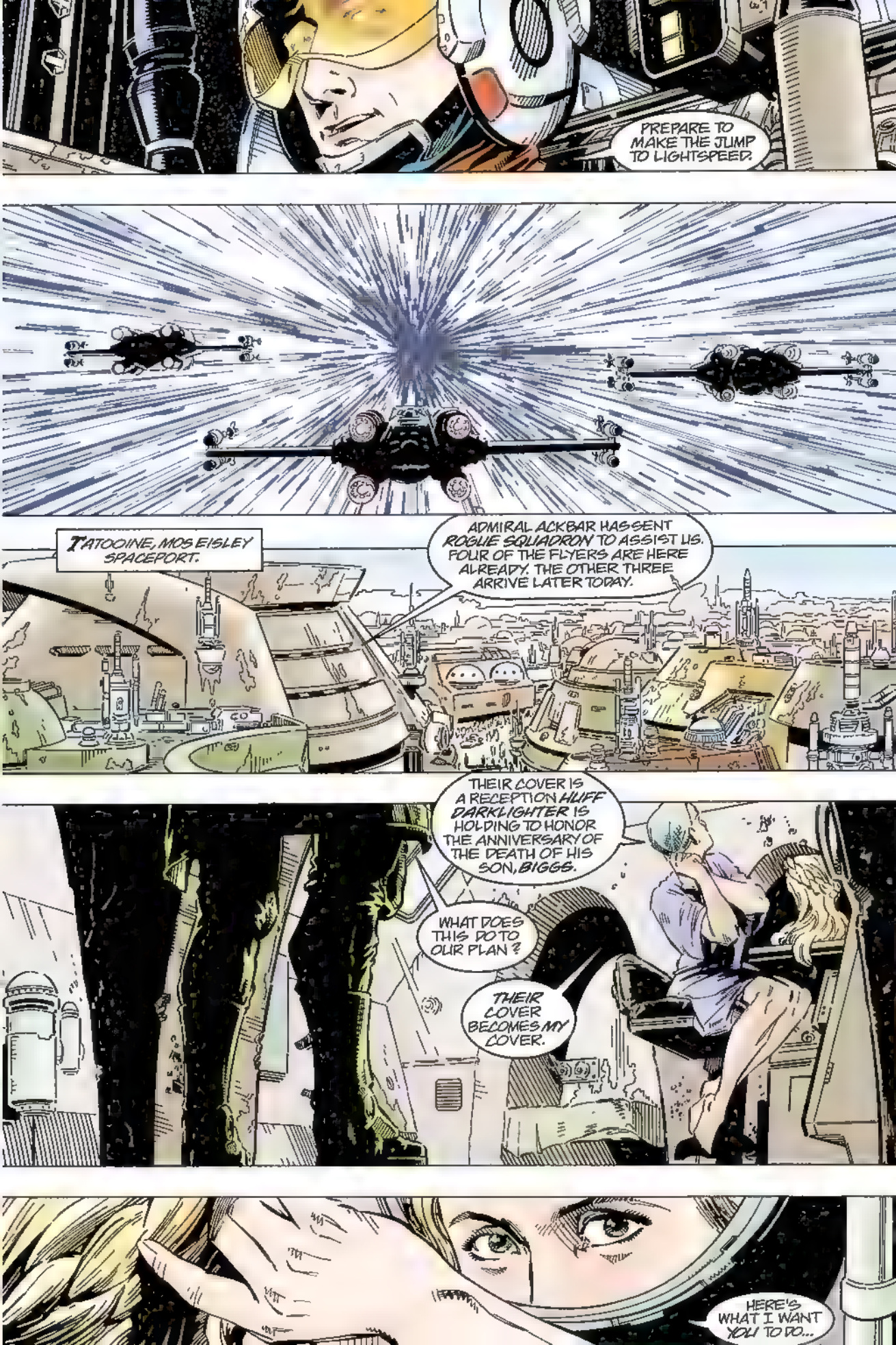
colors by Dave Nestelle, Perry McNamee

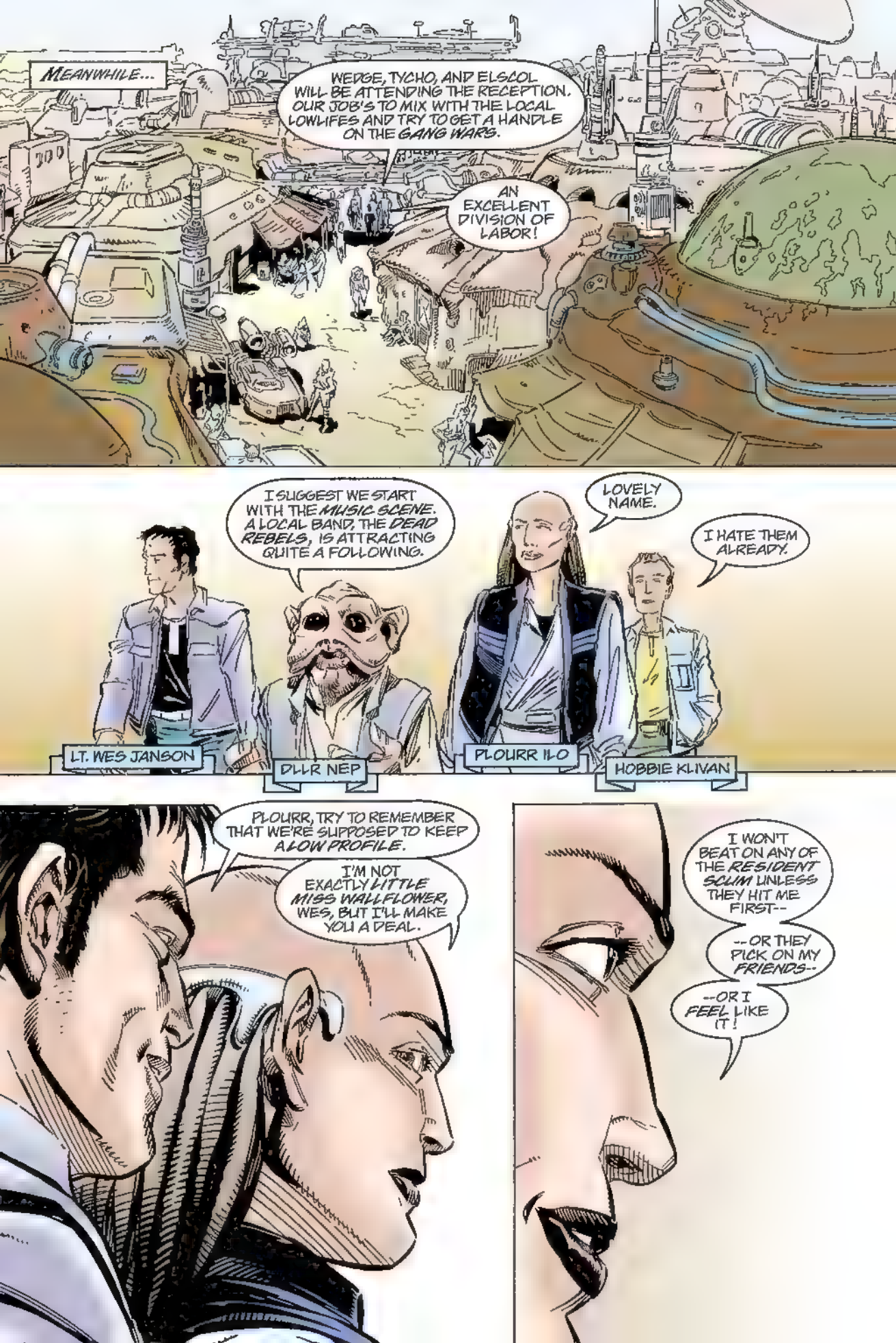
I TOLD YOU EVERYTHING! A COUPLE OF EXTRA I.D. CARDS DON'T MAKE ME A REBEL TRAITOR!
WHAPP!
YOU'LL REGRET THIS INSULT! I HAVE FRIENDS...RANKING FRIENDS IN THE EMPIRE!
THIS ONE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING.
NO! DON'T! I SWEAR...I'M LOYAL TO THE EMPEROR!

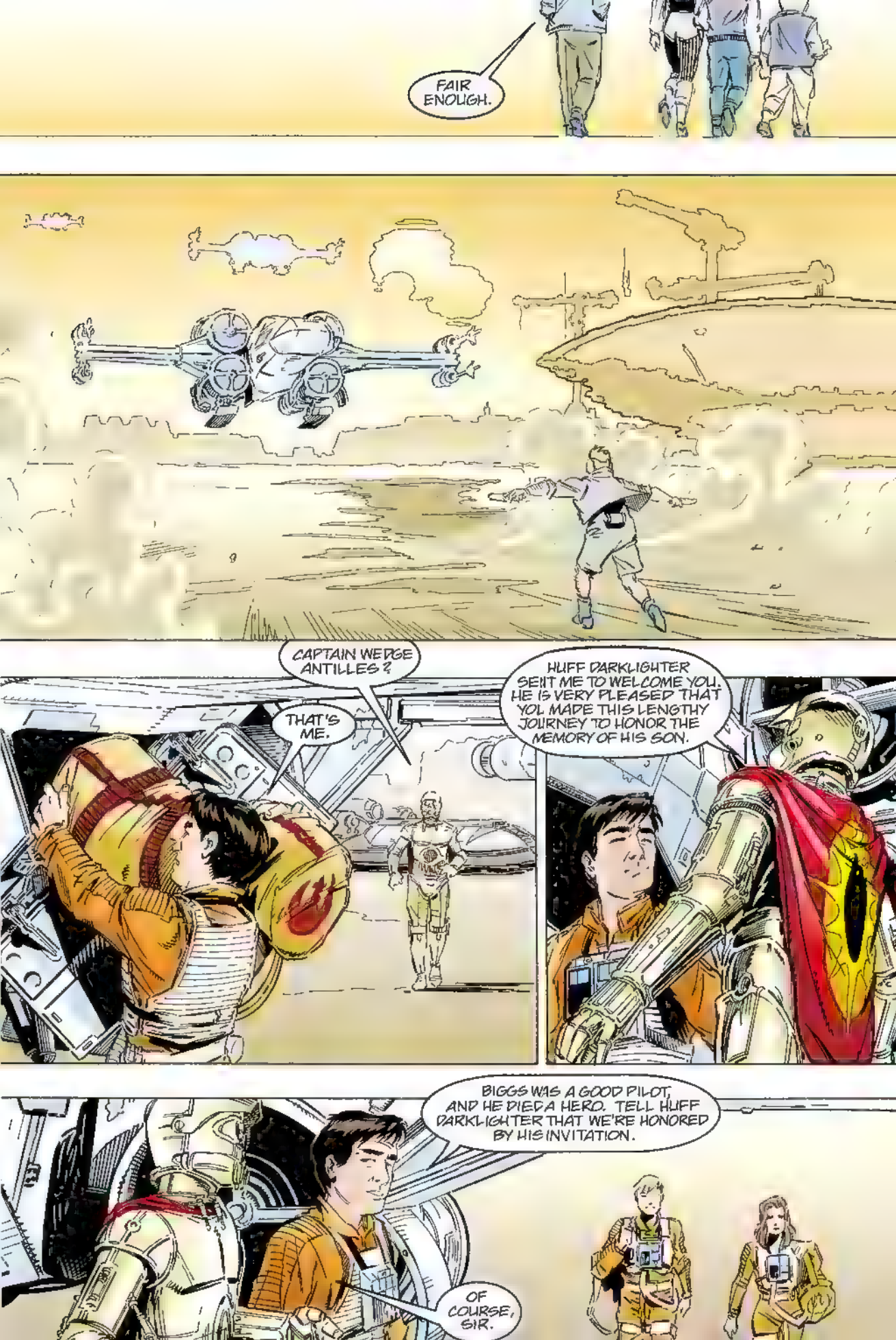
...VERY HANDY THAT IMPERIAL STORMTROOPERS DOCUMENT THEIR ABUSES. THAT RECORDING WAS MADE ON TATOOINE SHORTLY AFTER THE ABDUCTION OF PRINCESS LEIA.
WHO WAS THE GUY THEY TOASTED?
A CON MAN NAMED LIRIN BANOLT. HE USED TO PASS HIMSELF OFF AS AN IMPERIAL PROCUREMENT AGENT, OFFERING "EXCLUSIVE DEALS" IN EXCHANGE FOR HEFTY BRIBES.
BANOLT WOULD TAKE THE BRIBE AND THEN DISAPPEAR, RESURFACING LATER WITH A NEW NAME AND A NEW "DEAL."
SO, WHEN HE BRAGGED ABOUT HAVING FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES--?
THAT WAS THE SURPRISING THING. WHEN WE ANALYZED THE DEBRIS FROM THE CONDENSATION UNIT THE STORM TROOPERS DESTROYED--
--WE FOUND THAT IT DISGUISED AN IMPERIAL HOLONET TRANSCEIVER. EITHER BANOLT STOLE IT, OR...
HE REALLY DID HAVE HIGH-RANKING IMPERIAL CONNECTIONS.

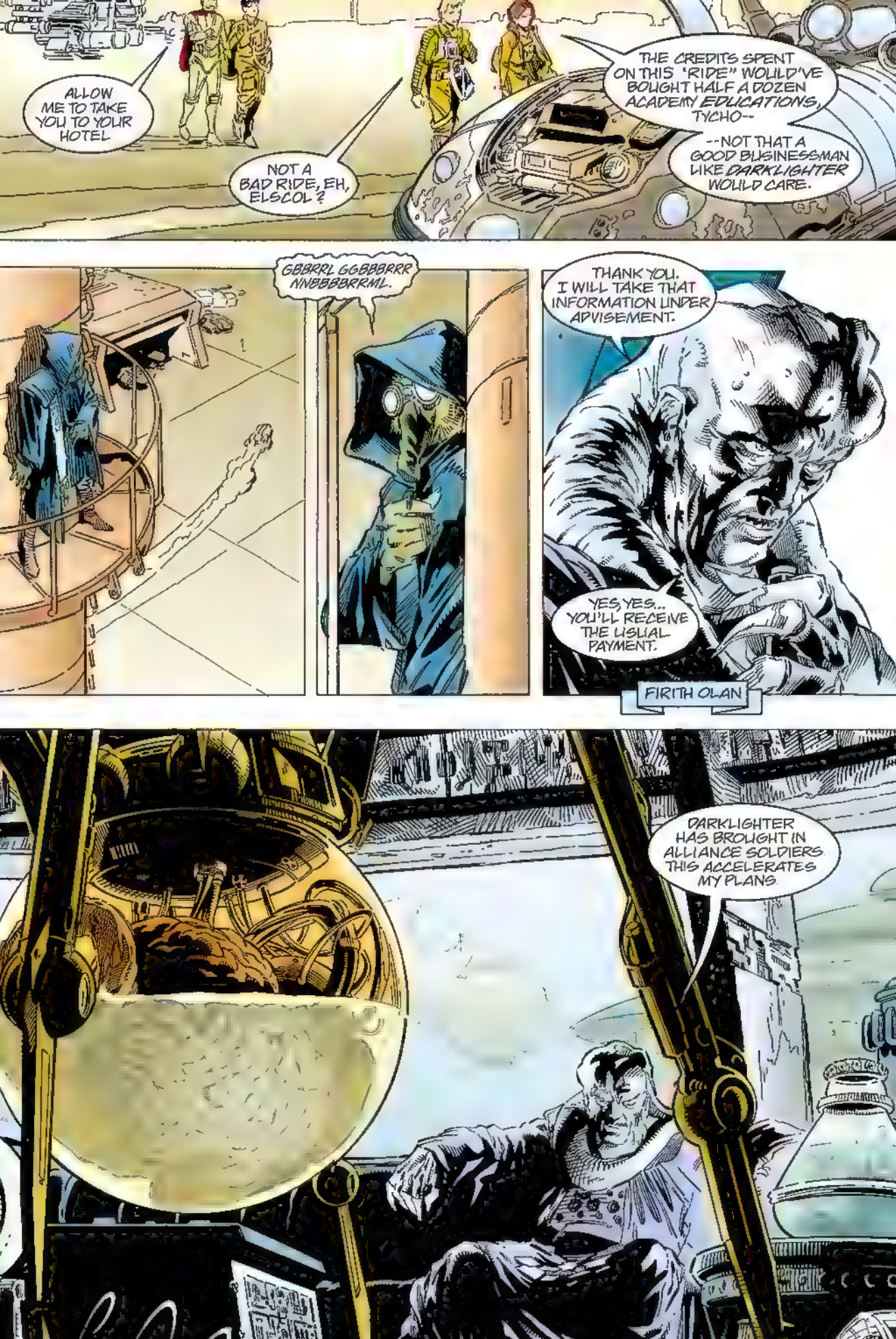

WE HAVE AN AGENT ON TATOOINE INVESTIGATING THE MATTER, BUT THE DEATH OF JABBA THE HUTT HAS CAUSED PROBLEMS.
WATCH YOUR FINGER.
THE LOCAL WARLORDS ARE ALL FIGHTING FOR SUPREMACY. THE RESULT IS ANARCHY.
I'M SENDING YOU AND ROGUE SQUADRON TO TATOOINE TO HELP OUR AGENT. IF SHE REQUIRES A STRIKE FORCE--
SHE?
I TELL YOU, WEDGE, THE AGENT HAS TO BE WINTER!


WISHFUL THINKING, TYCHO. THE ALLIANCE HAS A LOT OF FEMALE AGENTS.
YEAH, BUT--
CAPT. WEDGE ANTILLES
--HOW MANY WOULD HAVE THE GUTS TO GO UNDERCOVER ON TATOOINE IN THE MIDDLE OF A GANG WAR?
LT. TYCHO CELCHU
SURELY, LIEUTENANT CELCHU, YOU AREN'T SUGGESTING THAT FEMALE REBELS LACK COURAGE!
ELSCOL LORO
OKAY, TYCHO-- LET'S HEAR YOU FAST-TALK YOUR WAY OUT OF THIS ONE!
NO CONTEST, CAPTAIN! I PLEAD TEMPORARY INSANITY AND BEG THE LADY'S FORGIVENESS!
APOLOGY ACCEPTED, LIEUTENANT--BUT WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOUR INSANITY IS TEMPORARY?

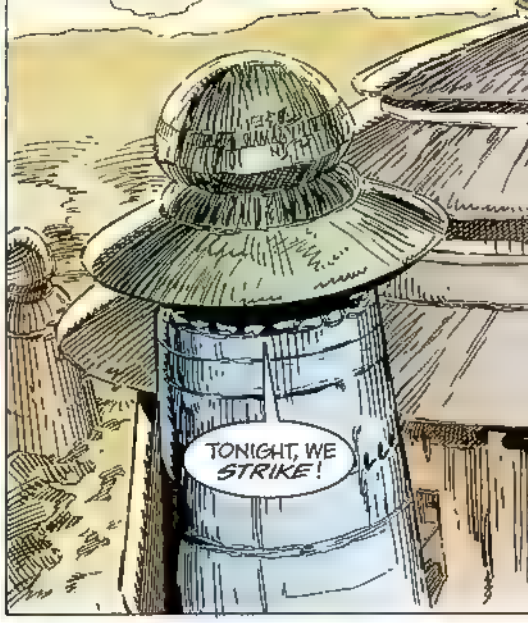

PREPARE TO MAKE THE JUMP TO LIGHTSPEED.
TATOOINE, MOS EISLEY SPACEPORT.
ADMIRAL ACKBAR HAS SENT ROGUE SQUADRON TO ASSIST US. FOUR OF THE FLYERS ARE HERE ALREADY. THE OTHER THREE ARRIVE LATER TODAY.
THEIR COVER IS A RECEPTION HUFF DARKLIGHTER IS HOLDING TO HONOR THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF HIS SON, BIGGS.
WHAT DOES THIS DO TO OUR PLAN?
THEIR COVER BECOMES MY COVER.
HERE'S WHAT I WANT YOU TO DO...


MEANWHILE...
WEDGE, TYCHO, AND ELSCOL WILL BE ATTENDING THE RECEPTION. OUR JOB'S TO MIX WITH THE LOCAL LOWLIFES AND TRY TO GET A HANDLE ON THE GANG WARS.
AN EXCELLENT DIVISION OF LABOR!
I SUGGEST WE START WITH THE MUSIC SCENE. A LOCAL BAND, THE DEAD REBELS, IS ATTRACTING QUITE A FOLLOWING.
LOVELY NAME.
I HATE THEM ALREADY.
LT. WES JANSON
DLLR NEP
PLOURR ILO
HOBBIE KLIVAN
PLOURR, TRY TO REMEMBER THAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO KEEP A LOW PROFILE.
I'M NOT EXACTLY LITTLE MISS WALLFLOWER, WES, BUT I'LL MAKE YOU A DEAL.
I WON'T BEAT ON ANY OF THE RESIDENT SCUM UNLESS THEY HIT ME FIRST--
--OR THEY PICK ON MY FRIENDS--
--OR I FEEL LIKE IT!

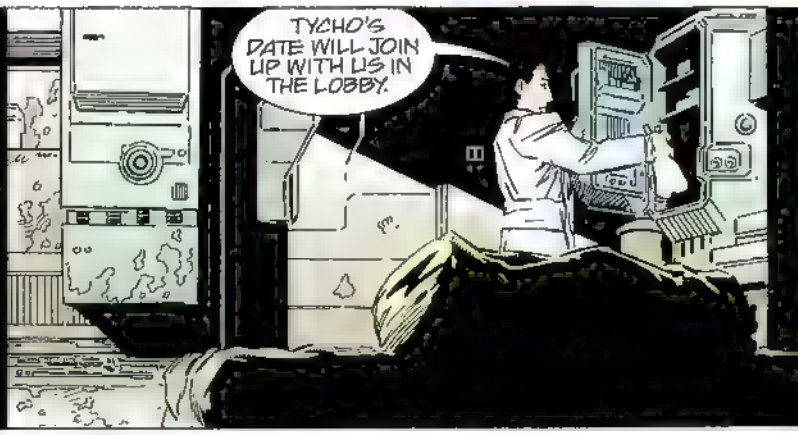

FAIR ENOUGH.
CAPTAIN WEDGE ANTILLES?
THAT'S ME.
HUFF DARKLIGHTER SENT ME TO WELCOME YOU. HE IS VERY PLEASED THAT YOU MADE THIS LENGTHY JOURNEY TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF HIS SON.
BIGGS WAS A GOOD PILOT, AND HE DIED A HERO. TELL HUFF DARKLIGHTER THAT WE'RE HONORED BY HIS INVITATION.
OF COURSE, SIR.

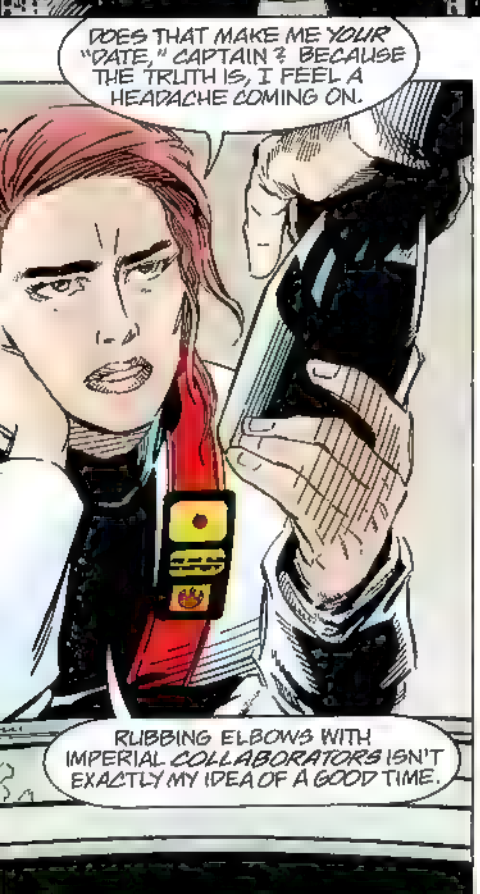

ALLOW ME TO TAKE YOU TO YOUR HOTEL
NOT A BAD RIDE, EH, ELSCOL?
THE CREDITS SPENT ON THIS "RIDE" WOULD'VE BOUGHT HALF A DOZEN ACADEMY EDUCATIONS, TYCHO--
--NOT THAT A GOOD BUSINESSMAN LIKE DARKLIGHTER WOULD CARE.
GBBRRL GGBBBRRR NNBBBRRML.
THANK YOU. I WILL TAKE THAT INFORMATION UNDER ADVISEMENT.
YES, YES... YOU'LL RECEIVE THE USUAL PAYMENT.
FIRITH OLAN
DARKLIGHTER HAS BROUGHT IN ALLIANCE SOLDIERS. THIS ACCELERATES MY PLANS.

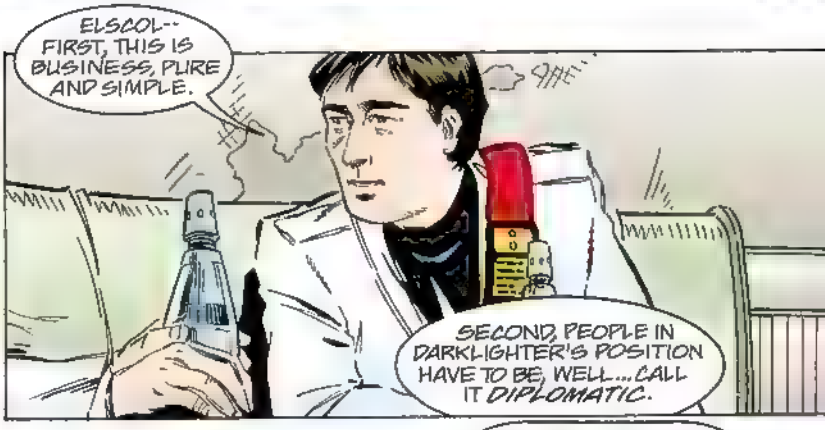
NOW I MUST SECURE BY *FORCE* WHAT I WOULD HAVE ACHIEVED BY *NEGOTIATION*.

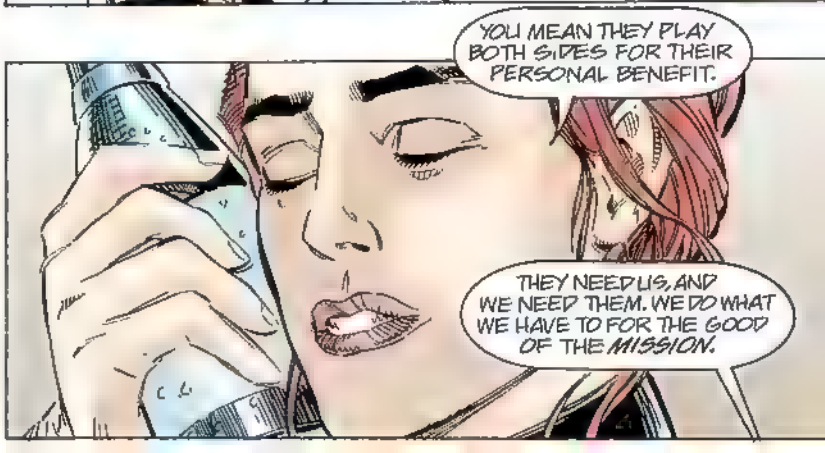

TONIGHT, WE *STRIKE*!

THIS INVITATION IS FOR *FOUR* PERSONS. IS ONE OF THE OTHERS JOINING US AT THE RECEPTION?

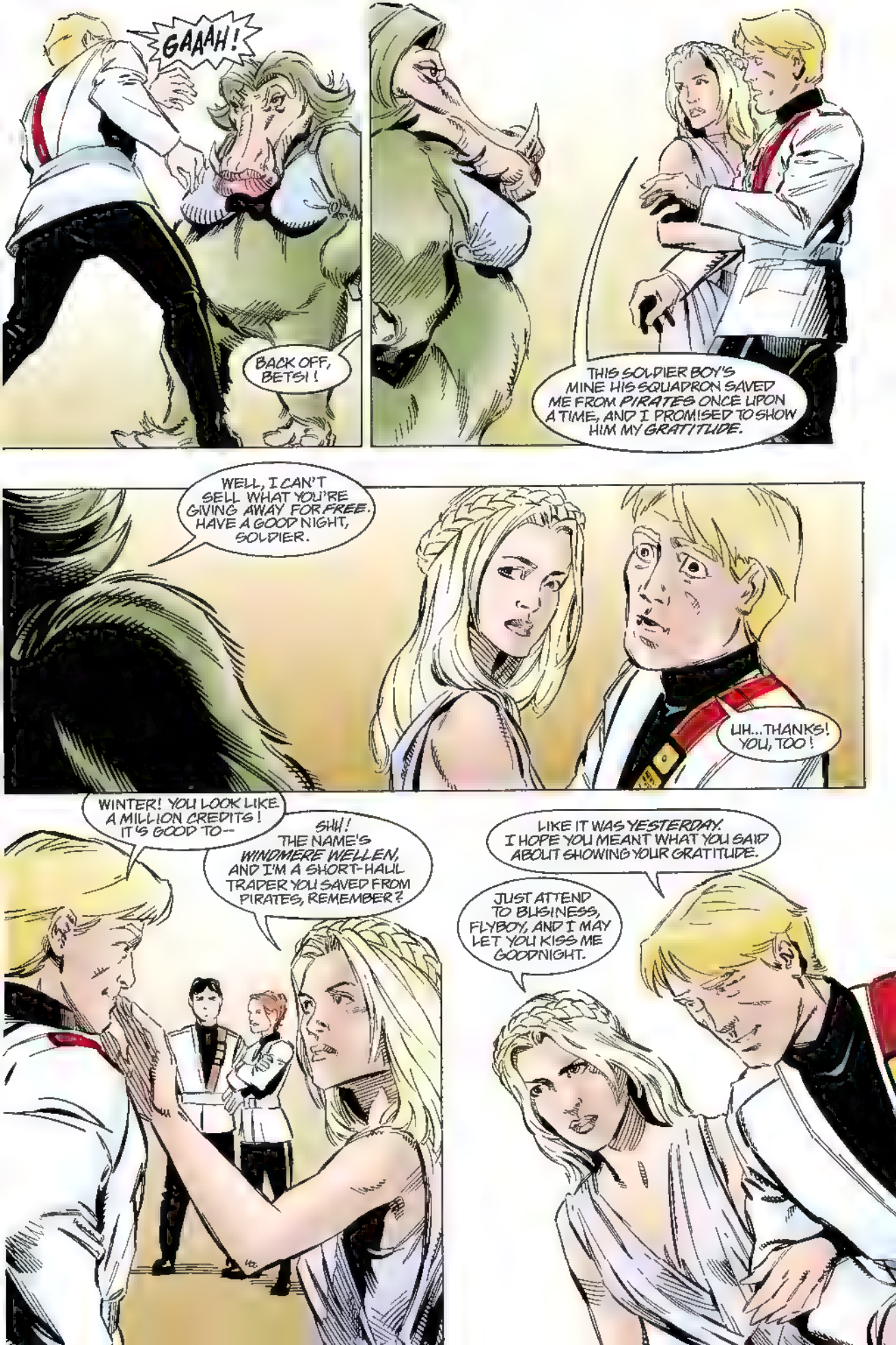

TYCHO'S DATE WILL JOIN UP WITH US IN THE LOBBY.

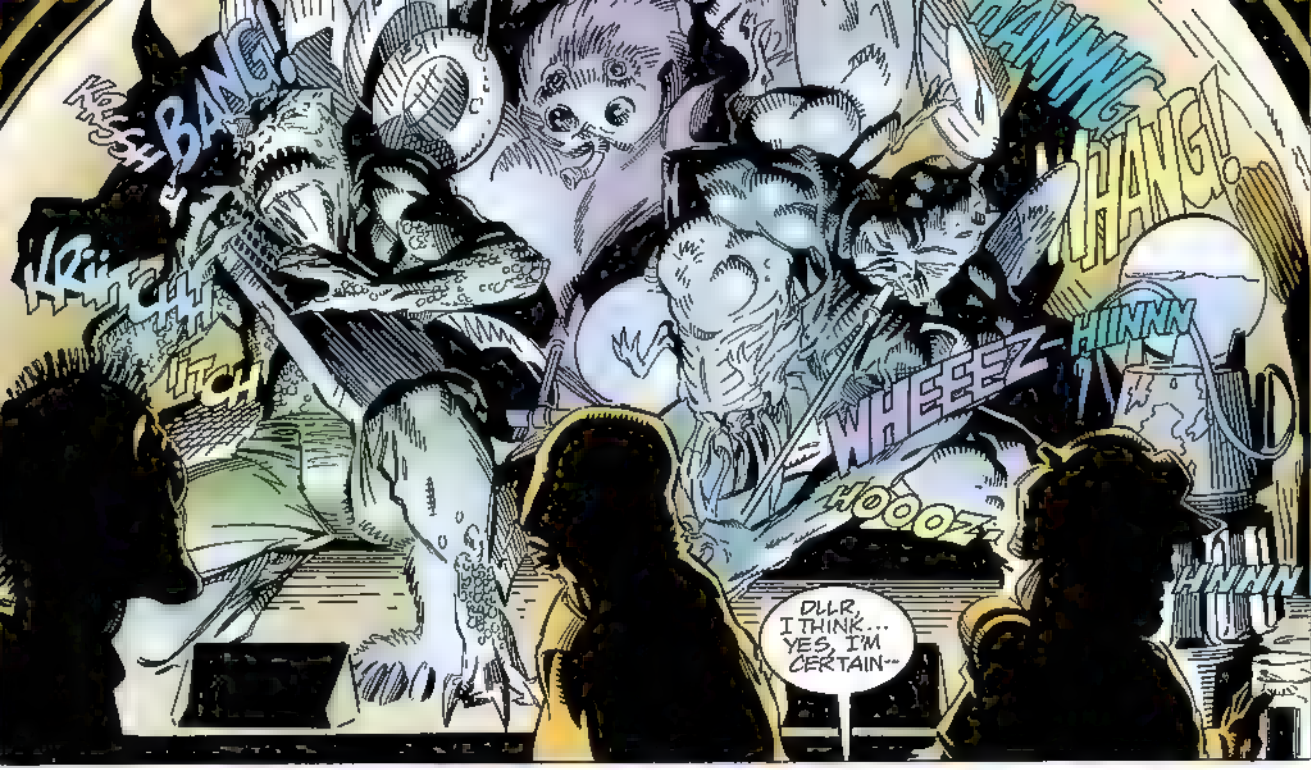

DOES THAT MAKE ME *YOUR* "DATE," CAPTAIN? BECAUSE THE TRUTH IS, I FEEL A HEADACHE COMING ON.
RUBBING ELBOWS WITH IMPERIAL *COLLABORATORS* ISN'T EXACTLY MY IDEA OF A GOOD TIME.


ELSCOL-- FIRST, THIS IS BUSINESS, PURE AND SIMPLE.
SECOND, PEOPLE IN DARKLIGHTER'S POSITION HAVE TO BE, WELL... CALL IT *DIPLOMATIC*.

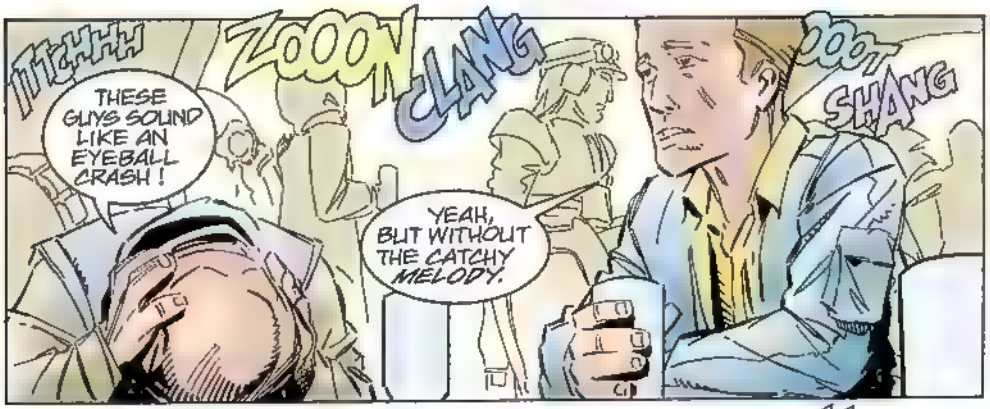

YOU MEAN THEY PLAY BOTH SIDES FOR THEIR PERSONAL BENEFIT.
THEY NEED US, AND WE NEED THEM. WE DO WHAT WE HAVE TO FOR THE GOOD OF THE *MISSION*.

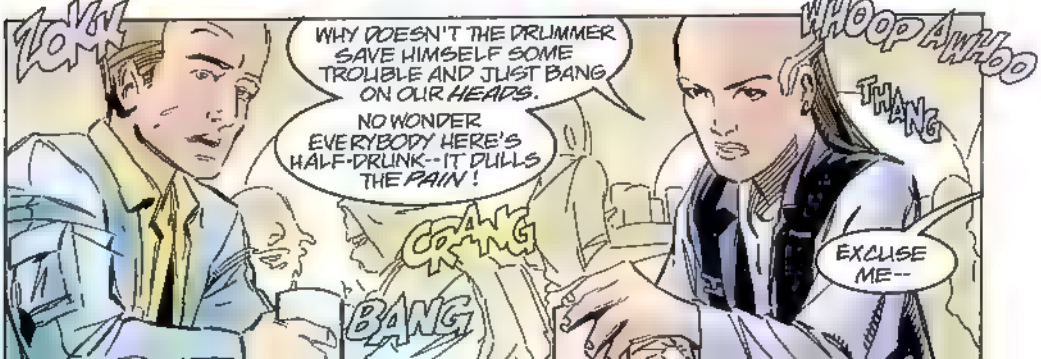
IT'S ALL ABOUT WORKING AS A TEAM FOR A COMMON GOAL.
I KNOW YOU'VE LOST YOUR HUSBAND AND YOUR FRIEND, GROZNIK. YOU FEEL LIKE BEING ALONE.
BUT TONIGHT, WE'RE GOING TO A PARTY. BECAUSE THAT'S OUR JOB.
YES... CAPTAIN.
WE'D BETTER BE GOING. THE ALLIANCE AGENT SHOULD BE INTRODUCING HERSELF TO TYCHO ABOUT NOW.
SO, ARE YOU MY DATE FOR THE EVENING?
WELL, IF IT ISN'T THE LOVELY AND TALENTED--


GAAAH!
BACK OFF, BETSI!
THIS SOLDIER BOY'S MINE HIS SQUADRON SAVED ME FROM PIRATES ONCE UPON A TIME, AND I PROMISED TO SHOW HIM MY GRATITUDE.
WELL, I CAN'T SELL WHAT YOU'RE GIVING AWAY FOR FREE. HAVE A GOOD NIGHT, SOLDIER.
UH...THANKS! YOU, TOO!
WINTER! YOU LOOK LIKE A MILLION CREDITS! IT'S GOOD TO--
SHH! THE NAME'S WINDMERE WELLEN, AND I'M A SHORT-HAUL TRADER YOU SAVED FROM PIRATES, REMEMBER?
LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY. I HOPE YOU MEANT WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT SHOWING YOUR GRATITUDE.
JUST ATTEND TO BUSINESS, FLYBOY, AND I MAY LET YOU KISS ME GOODNIGHT.


KA-SCH
BANG!
KRIITCH!
ITCH
DANNG
HANG!
HIINNN
WHEEEZ
HOOOZ
HNNN
DLLR, I THINK... YES, I'M CERTAIN--

ASH
KBASH
HOOOZ-HINN
ITCHHH
AT-TCHHHH
--I'M GOING TO KILL YOU FOR BRINGING US HERE.
NO NEED, WES. THE MUSIC IS DOING IT FOR YOU!


ITCHHH
ZOOON
CLANG
OOT
SHANG
THESE GUYS SOUND LIKE AN EYEBALL CRASH!
YEAH, BUT WITHOUT THE CATCHY MELODY.


ZOKK
WHOOP AWHOO
THANG
WHY DOESN'T THE DRUMMER SAVE HIMSELF SOME TROUBLE AND JUST BANG ON OUR HEADS.
NO WONDER EVERYBODY HERE'S HALF-DRUNK--IT DULLS THE PAIN!
CLANG
BANG
EXCUSE ME--

--YOU'RE SITTING IN MY CHAIR. MOVE... OR DIE.
PLOURR, YOU PROMISED...
SINCE THIS IS YOUR CHAIR--
WHUHUF!
--I'D BETTER LET YOU HAVE IT!

WELL, WE STILL LOST OUR TABLE.
SORRY, WES, BUT THEY MADE ME *FEEL* LIKE IT.
DON'T QUIT YOUR DAY JOB.
WAIT!

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR SOMEBODY TO PAY FOR THE DAMAGES--
NO, NOTHING LIKE THAT AT ALL!
I WANT TO HIRE YOU!

I NEED SOMEBODY TO STIR UP A CLIENT OF MINE... A BAD GAMBLER WHO'S SLOW TO PAY HIS DEBTS.
LET HIM GO.

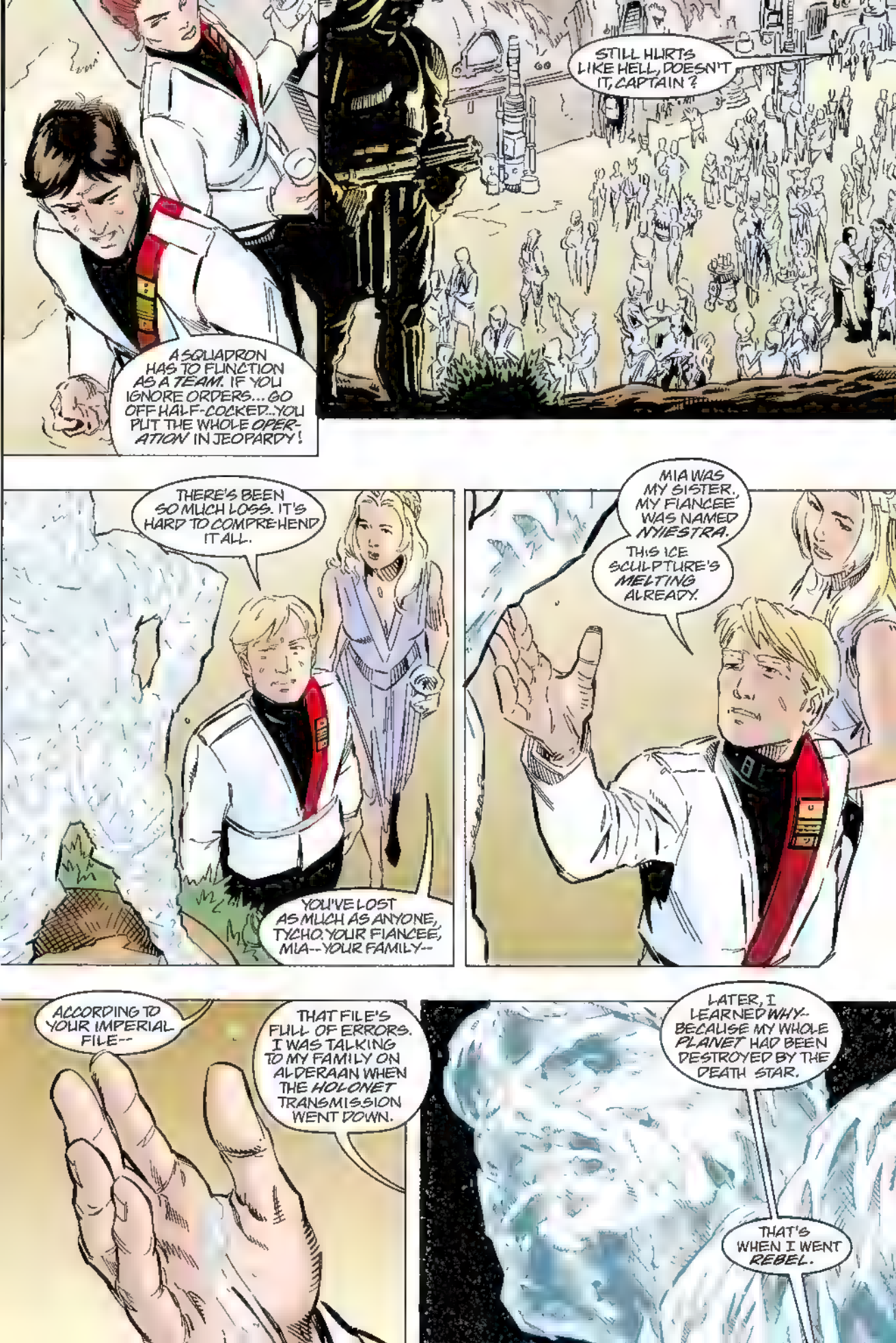
HE'S A DEW RANCHER. NO BLOODSHED... I JUST WANT TO GET HIS ATTENTION WITH SOME FIREWORKS.
I'VE GOT ALL THE HARDWARE. JOB PAYS FIVE HUNDRED CREDITS, AND SINCE YOU BEAT UP THE GUYS I WAS GOING TO USE....

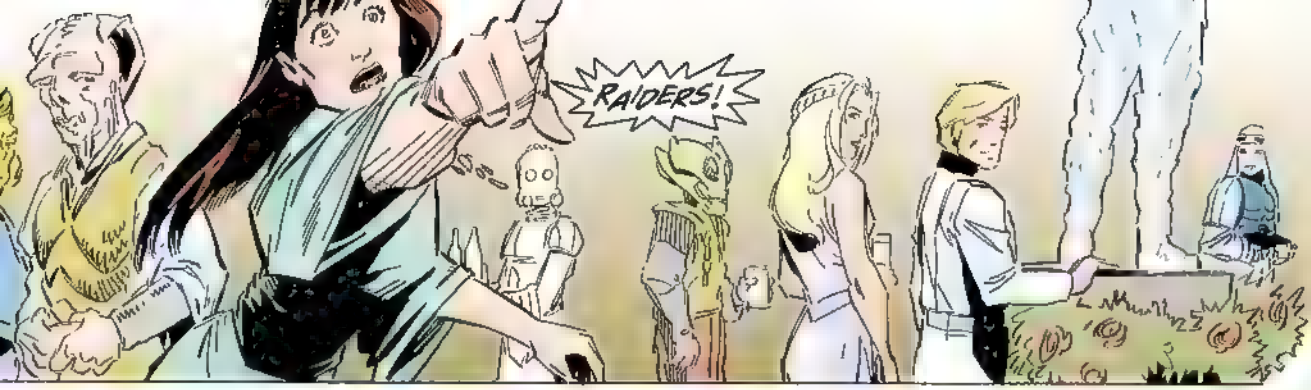
I DON'T THINK WE'RE INTERESTED...
AT THAT PRICE, THAT IS. MAKE IT A THOUSAND.
EIGHT HUNDRED. DEAL?
DEAL.

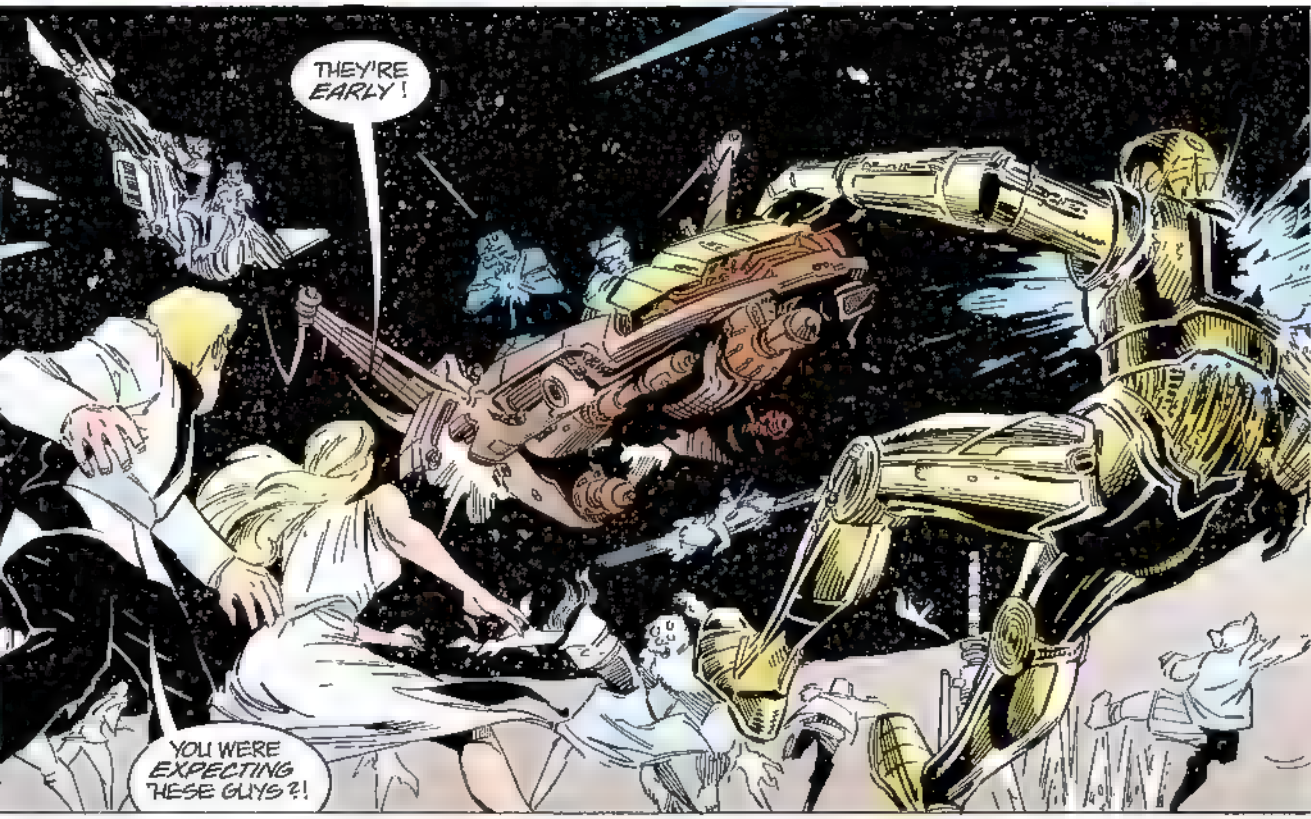
SO NOW WE'RE MERCENARIES?
HE'S CARRYING A MILITARY-GRADE IMPERIAL BLASTER--BRAND-NEW. THIS IS NO GAMBLING DEBT.

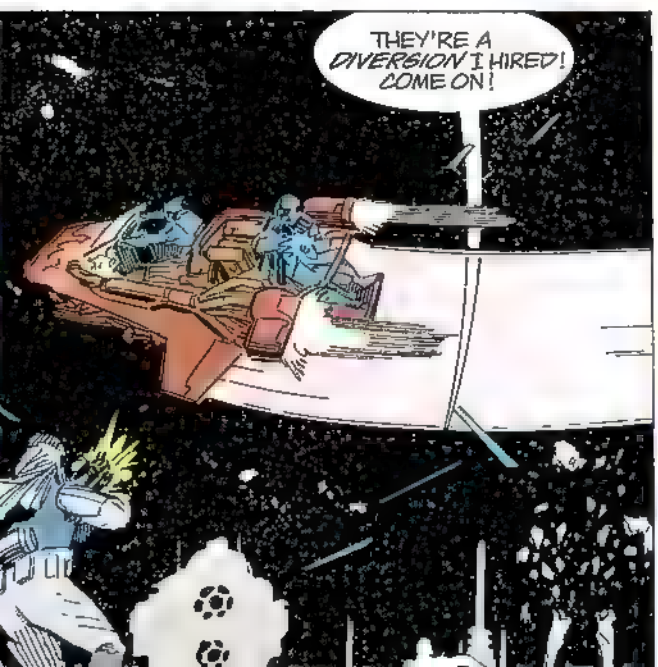
WE'LL PLAY ALONG UNTIL WE FIND OUT WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON.

MY BOY WAS HIS OWN MAN, THAT'S FOR SURE. ONCE BIGGS WAS IN A FIGHT, HE WAS IN IT ALL THE WAY... NO COMPROMISES!
TAKE YOUR SITUATION, FOR INSTANCE. THE WAY YOU RAN OUT OF THAT DEATH STAR TRENCH. NOW MY BOY BIGGS...
I WAS ORDERED OUT, SIR. MY SHIP WAS HIT AND...
SURE, SURE, SURE. AND NO ONE'S BLAMING YOU FOR BIGGS' DEATH, EVEN THOUGH YOU DID LEAVE HIM PRETTY WIDE OPEN THERE.
BUT THE POINT IS, BIGGS WOULD'VE HUNG IN, ORDERS OR NO ORDERS. I GUESS THAT'S WHY HE'S THE HERO.
I GUESS SO, SIR.
GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT TONIGHT, WEDGE. YOU ENJOY YOURSELF.
HOW COULD I NOT?
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE A DRINK.
HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND! MY STABILIZER WAS HIT -- I WAS A MENACE IN THAT TRENCH!
LUKE WAS RIGHT TO ORDER ME OUT... AND I WAS RIGHT TO OBEY THAT ORDER!


A SQUADRON HAS TO FUNCTION AS A TEAM. IF YOU IGNORE ORDERS... GO OFF HALF-COCKED...YOU PUT THE WHOLE OPERATION IN JEOPARDY!
STILL HURTS LIKE HELL, DOESN'T IT, CAPTAIN?
THERE'S BEEN SO MUCH LOSS. IT'S HARD TO COMPREHEND IT ALL.
YOU'VE LOST AS MUCH AS ANYONE, TYCHO. YOUR FIANCEE, MIA--YOUR FAMILY--
MIA WAS MY SISTER. MY FIANCEE WAS NAMED NYIESTRA.
THIS ICE SCULPTURE'S MELTING ALREADY.
ACCORDING TO YOUR IMPERIAL FILE--
THAT FILE'S FULL OF ERRORS. I WAS TALKING TO MY FAMILY ON ALDERAAN WHEN THE HOLONET TRANSMISSION WENT DOWN.
LATER, I LEARNED WHY- BECAUSE MY WHOLE PLANET HAD BEEN DESTROYED BY THE DEATH STAR.
THAT'S WHEN I WENT REBEL.


RAIDERS!

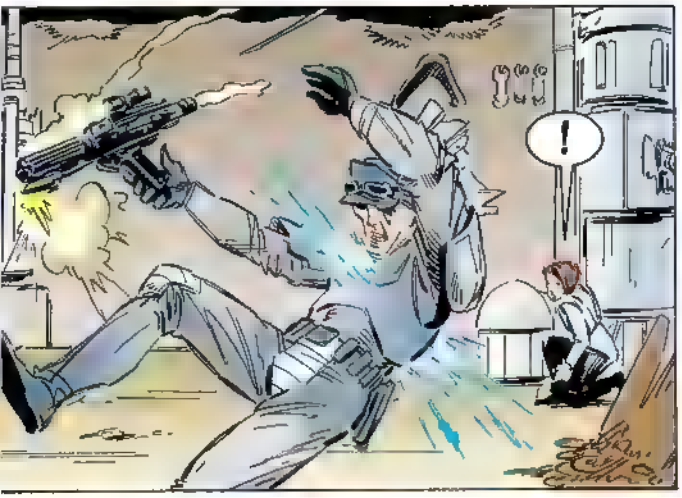

THEY'RE EARLY!
YOU WERE EXPECTING THESE GUYS?!


THEY'RE A DIVERSION I HIRED! COME ON!

DO SOMETHING!
WITH WHAT? YOUR PROTOCOL DROID ASSURED US WE DIDN'T HAVE TO PACK OUR BLASTERS!

THERE'S A VALUABLE DATA DISK IN DARKLIGHTER'S SAFE THAT I'M ITCHING TO GET MY HANDS ON!

YOU STAGED ALL THIS FOR A DATA DISK?
THEY'RE UNDER STRICT ORDERS TO HURT NO ONE! THEY'LL BREAK OFF THE RAID ANY MOMENT NOW!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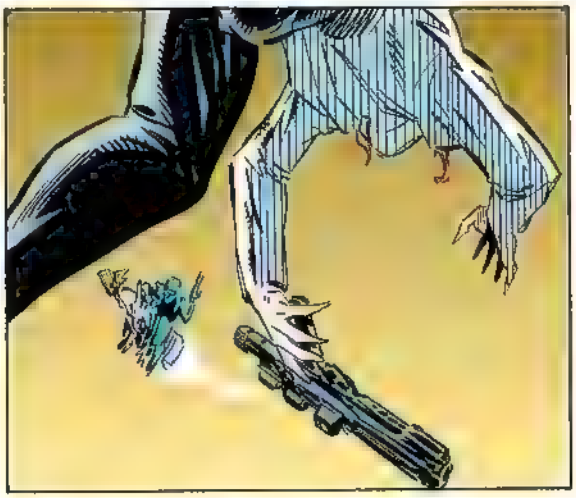
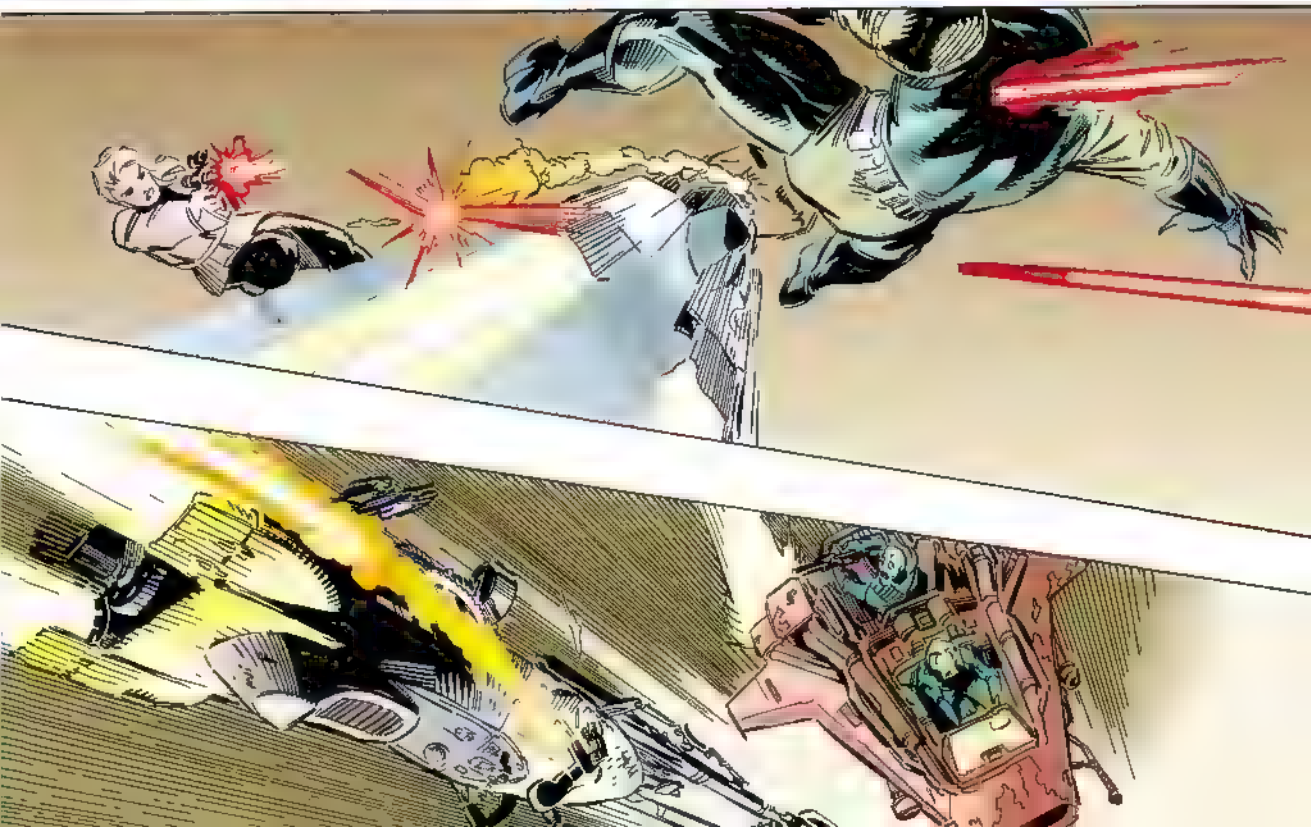
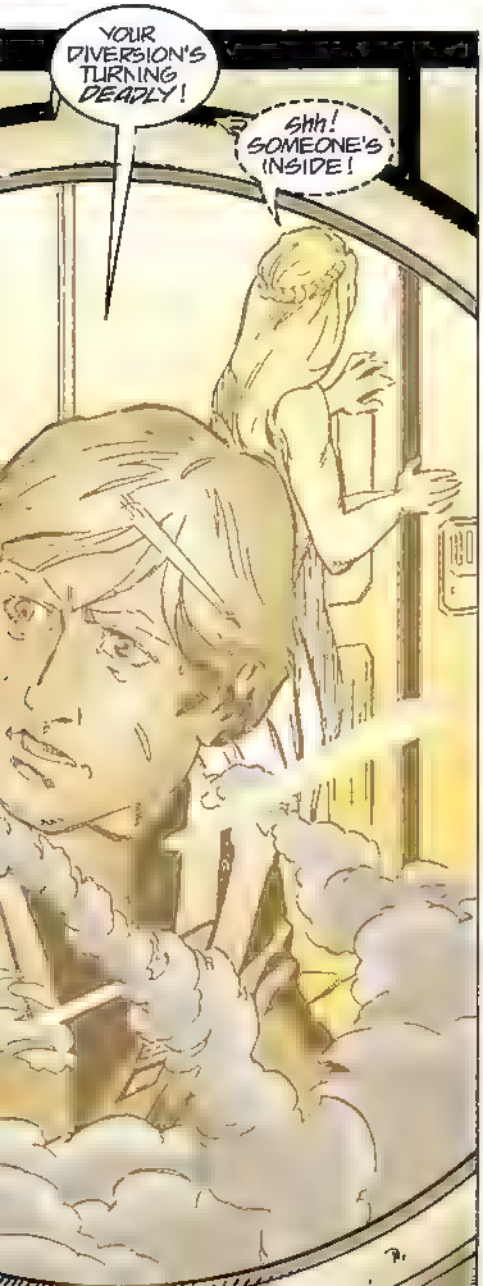
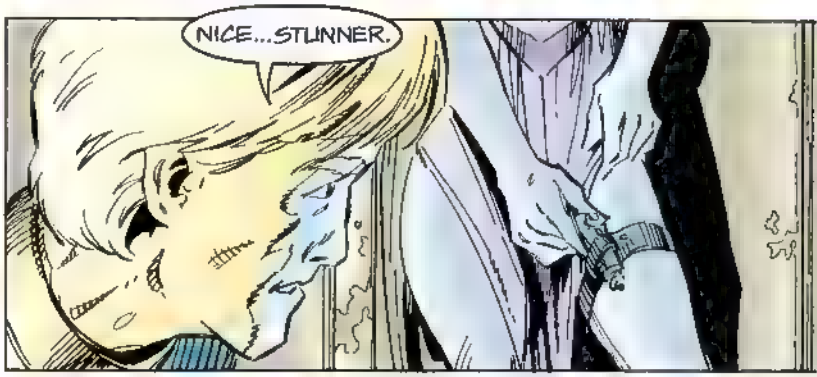
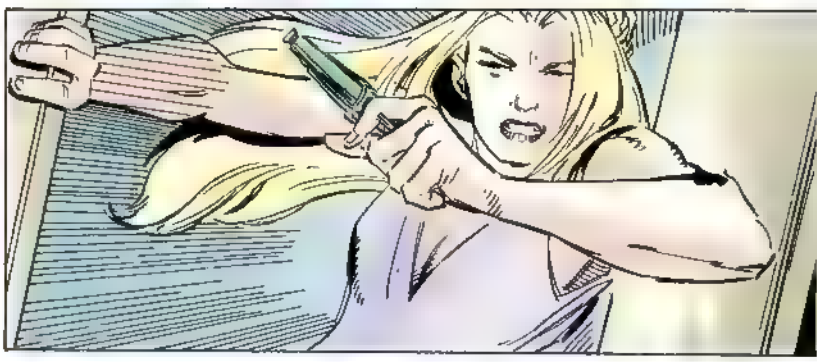
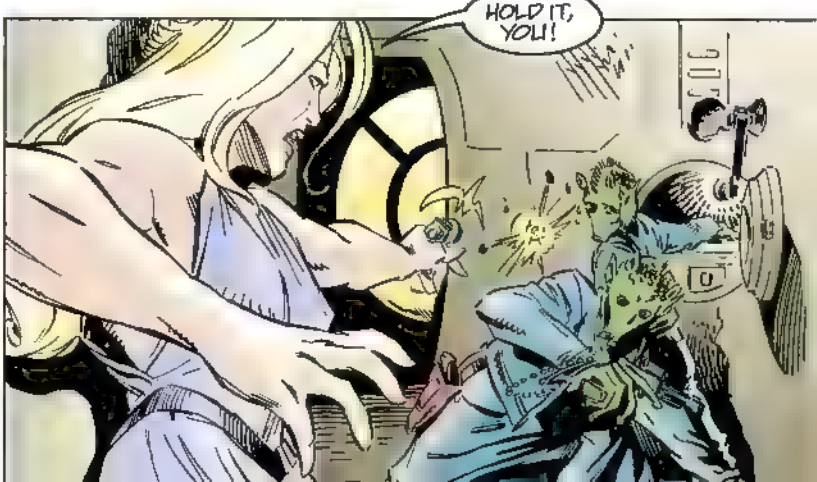





YOUR DIVERSION'S TURNING DEADLY!
SHH! SOMEONE'S INSIDE!

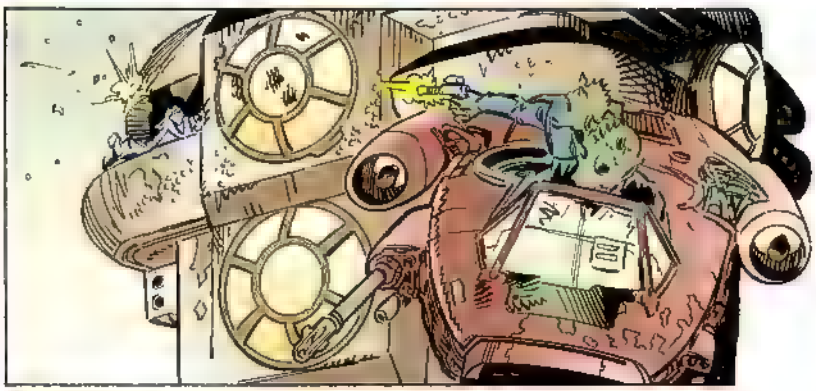

NICE...STUNNER.

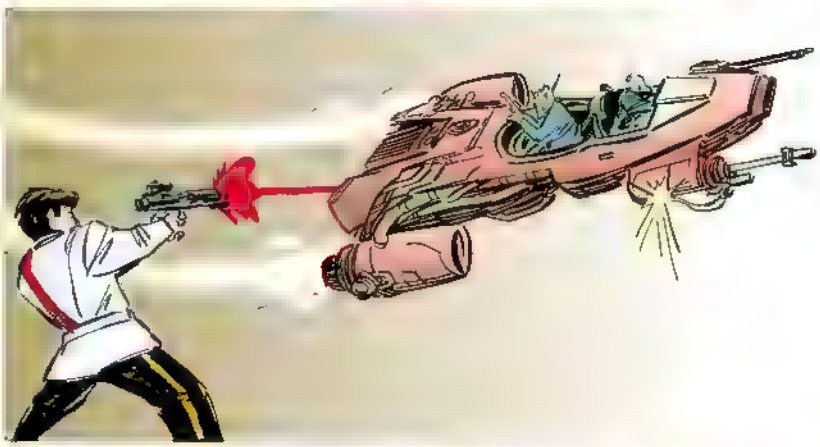



HOLD IT, YOU!

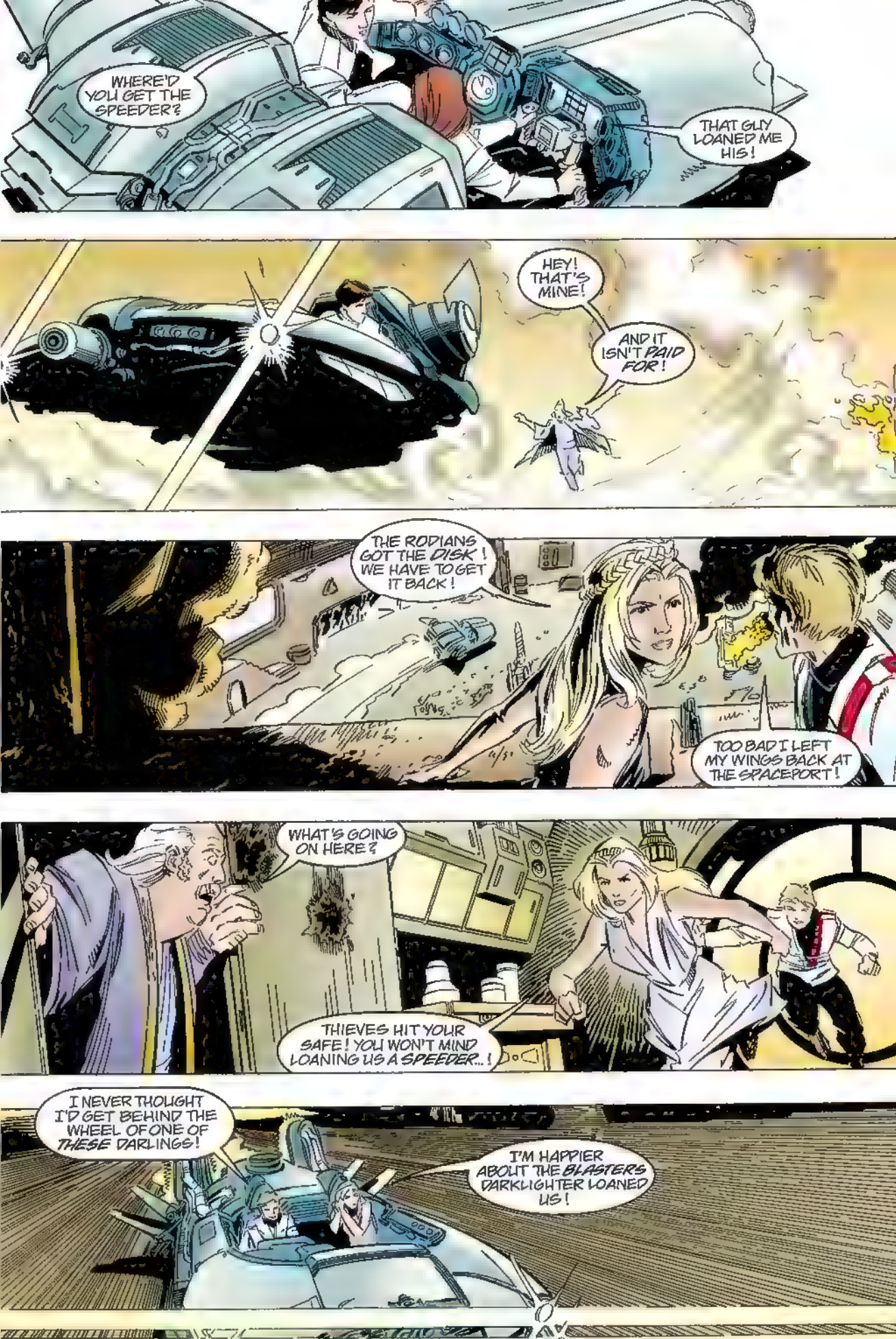
ELSCOL!
WAIT!

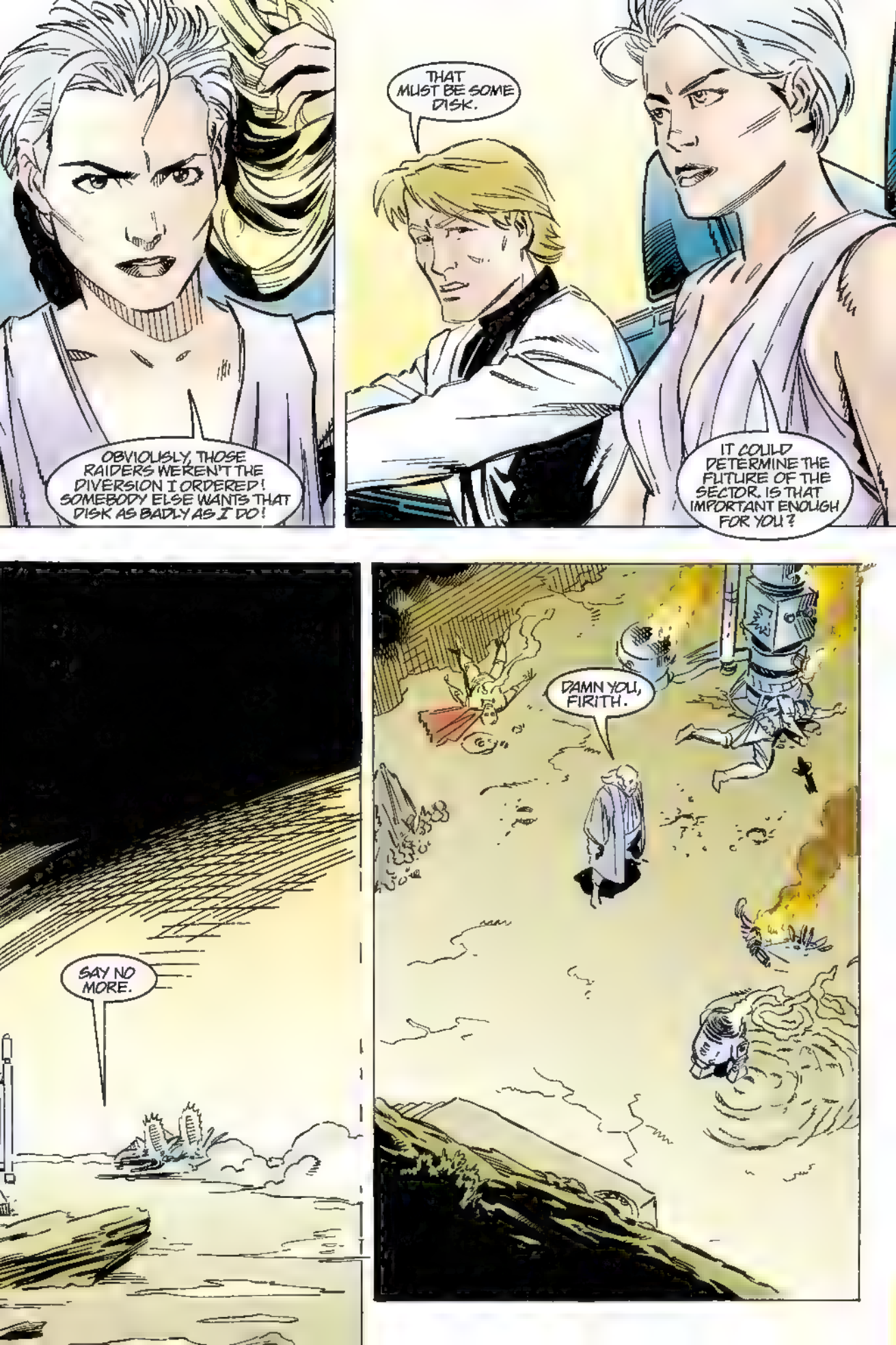
WEDGE! STOP THOSE RODIANS!





GET IN, WEDGE!

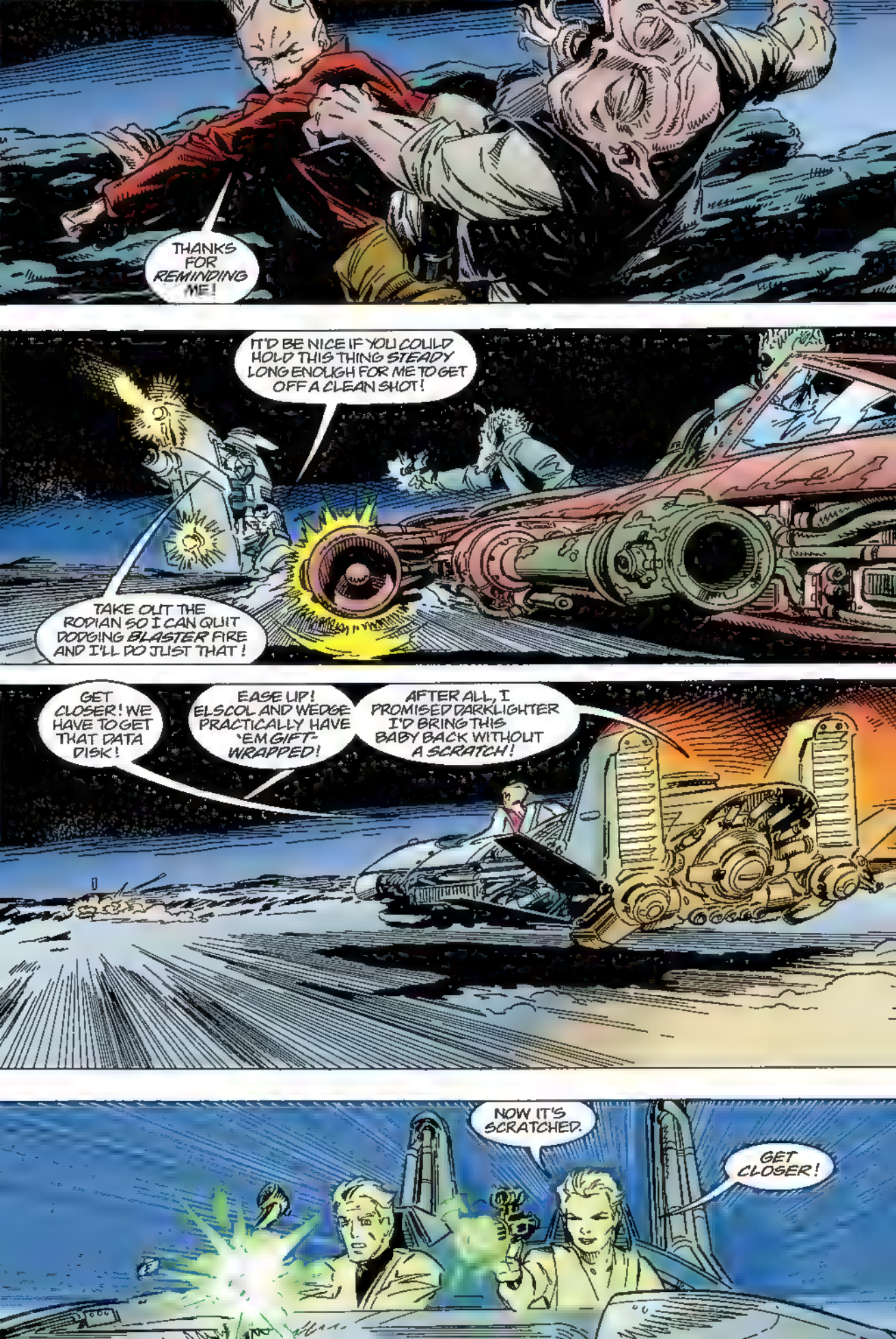

WHERE'D YOU GET THE SPEEDER?
THAT GUY LOANED ME HIS!
HEY! THAT'S MINE!
AND IT ISN'T PAID FOR!
THE RODIANS GOT THE DISK! WE HAVE TO GET IT BACK!
TOO BAD I LEFT MY WINGS BACK AT THE SPACEPORT!
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
THIEVES HIT YOUR SAFE! YOU WON'T MIND LOANING US A SPEEDER...!
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D GET BEHIND THE WHEEL OF ONE OF THESE DARLINGS!
I'M HAPPIER ABOUT THE BLASTERS DARKLIGHTER LOANED US!


OBVIOUSLY, THOSE RAIDERS WEREN'T THE DIVERSION I ORDERED! SOMEBODY ELSE WANTS THAT DISK AS BADLY AS I DO!
THAT MUST BE SOME DISK.
IT COULD DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF THE SECTOR. IS THAT IMPORTANT ENOUGH FOR YOU?
SAY NO MORE.
DAMN YOU, FIRITH.

IF THAT'S THE RANCH WE WERE SUPPOSED TO LIGHT UP, I'D SAY SOMEBODY BEAT US TO THE MATCH! WHAT DO YOU THINK, DL-LR?
I THINK WE'RE HEADED FOR A SUDDEN CHANGE OF PLANS, HOBBIE!
TAKE COVER! SOMEBODY'S COMING THIS WAY, AND THEY'RE IN A POWERFUL HURRY!

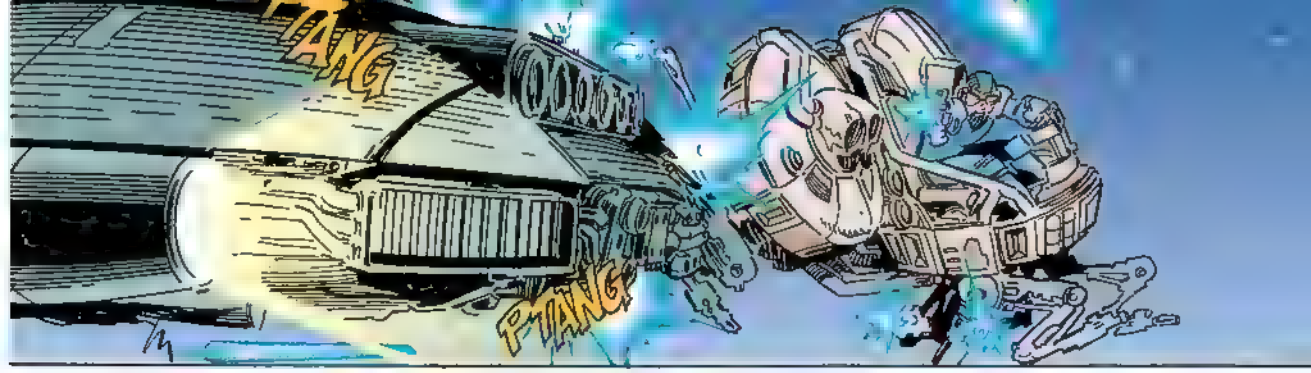
SORRY, GUYS, BUT YOUR MISSION IS SCRUBBED. I'LL PAY YOU HALF WHEN WE GET BACK TO MOS EISLEY.
BETTER IDEA--
SPARE US THE BANTHA DROPPINGS--
--AND TELL US WHAT A SIMPLE SHAKEDOWN ARTIST IS DOING WITH IMPERIAL BLASTERS AND SPEEDER BIKES!
I'LL PAY YOU DOUBLE TO FORGET YOU EVER SAW ME.
WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO FIGURE OUT THAT THIS ISN'T ABOUT MONEY?
WHAT I WANT IS THE TRUTH!

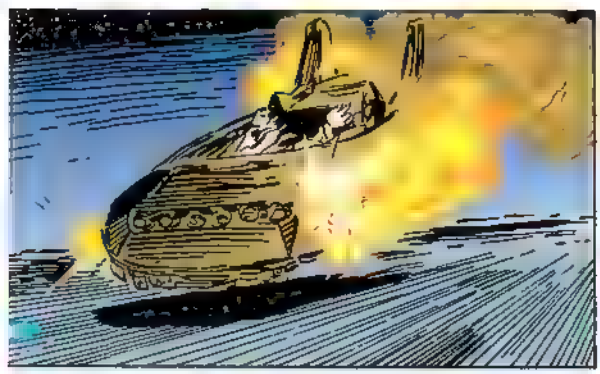
SPAK!
THE TRUTH IS... IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!
WHUMP!
UUUGHN!
DREAM ON.
DON'T SHOOT HIM! HE STILL HAS QUESTIONS TO ANSWER!
THEY ALWAYS FORGET ABOUT THE LITTLE GUY!
HOOF!

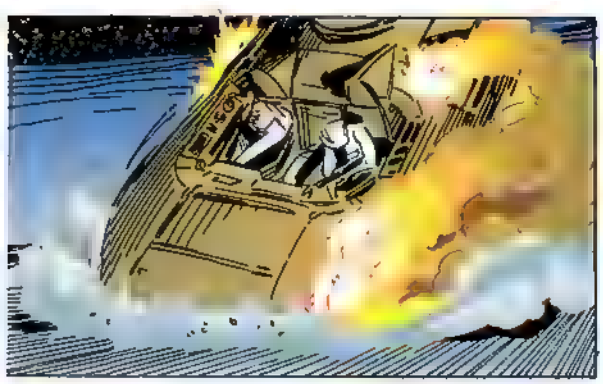

THANKS FOR REMINDING ME!
IT'D BE NICE IF YOU COULD HOLD THIS THING STEADY LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO GET OFF A CLEAN SHOT!
TAKE OUT THE RODIAN SO I CAN QUIT DODGING BLASTER FIRE AND I'LL DO JUST THAT!
GET CLOSER! WE HAVE TO GET THAT DATA DISK!
EASE UP! ELSCOL AND WEDGE PRACTICALLY HAVE 'EM GIFT-WRAPPED!
AFTER ALL, I PROMISED DARKLIGHTER I'D BRING THIS BABY BACK WITHOUT A SCRATCH!
NOW IT'S SCRATCHED.
GET CLOSER!

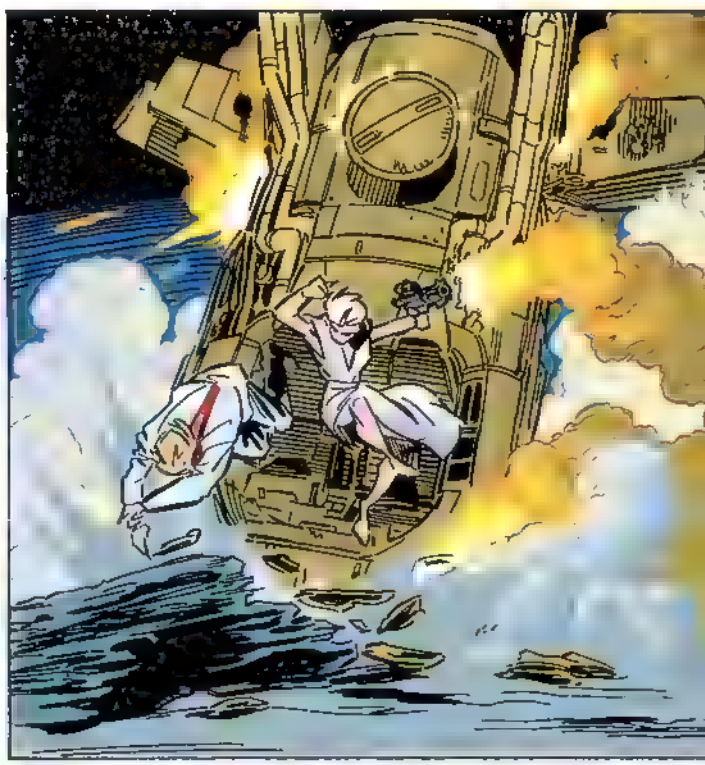
KAPP!
HUH?
UUUH!
SAY GOOD-NIGHT, CREEP!

HERE'S YOUR CLEAN SHOT, WEDGE!
AMBUSH!
KRAP
KRAP
KK KRRSSSH
HERE THEY COME!
KRAP
TH
MM

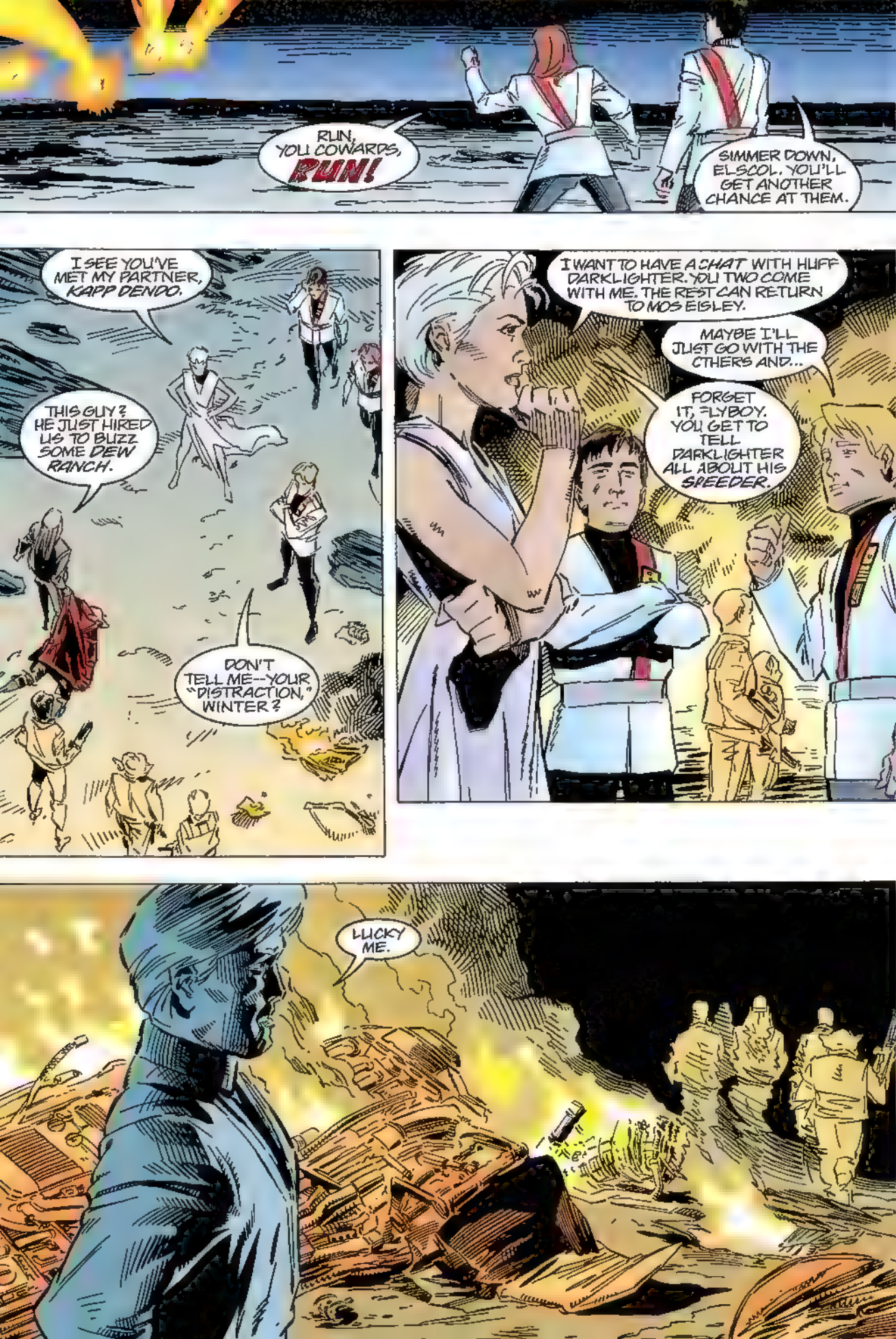

-ANG
OOOM
P-YANG

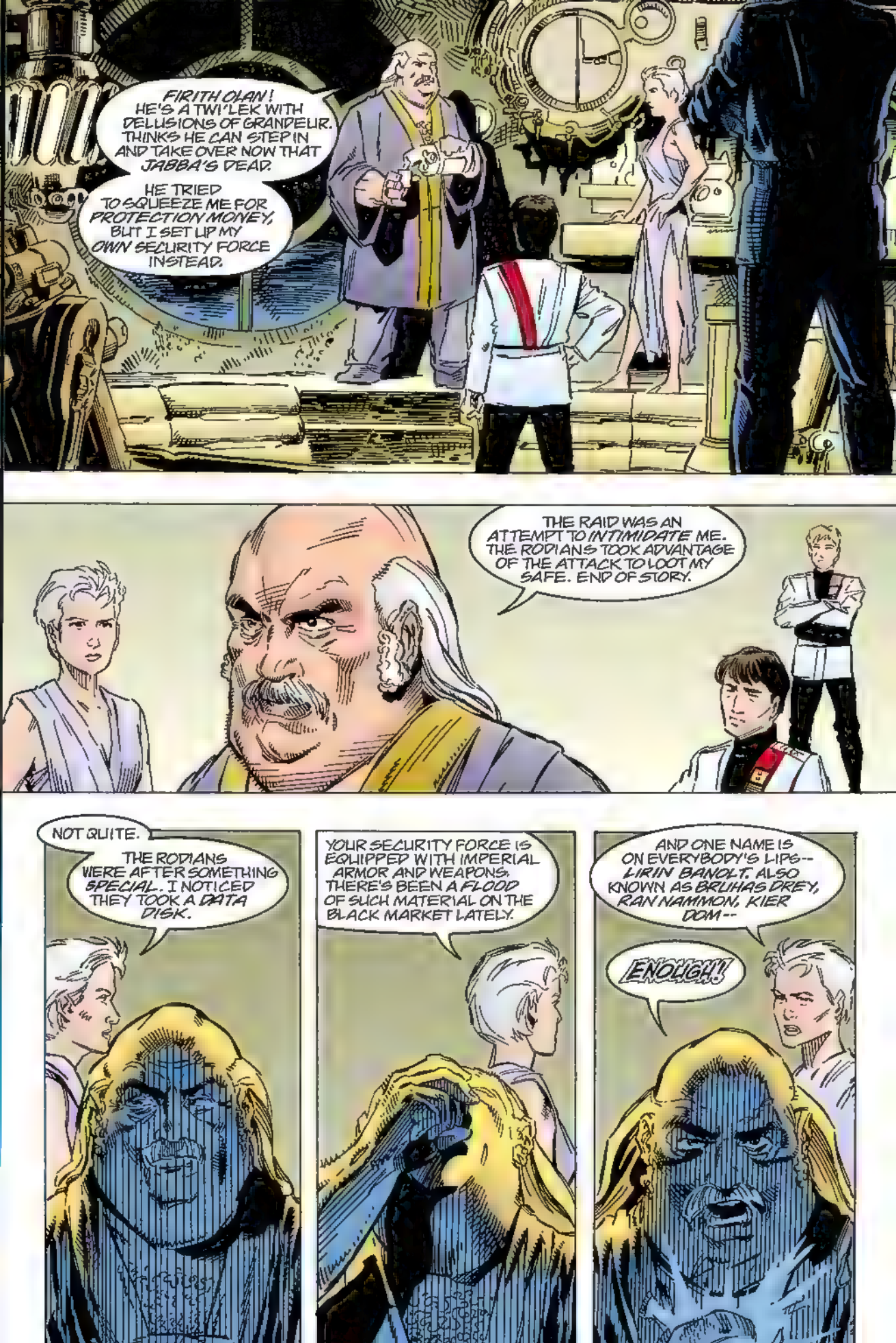




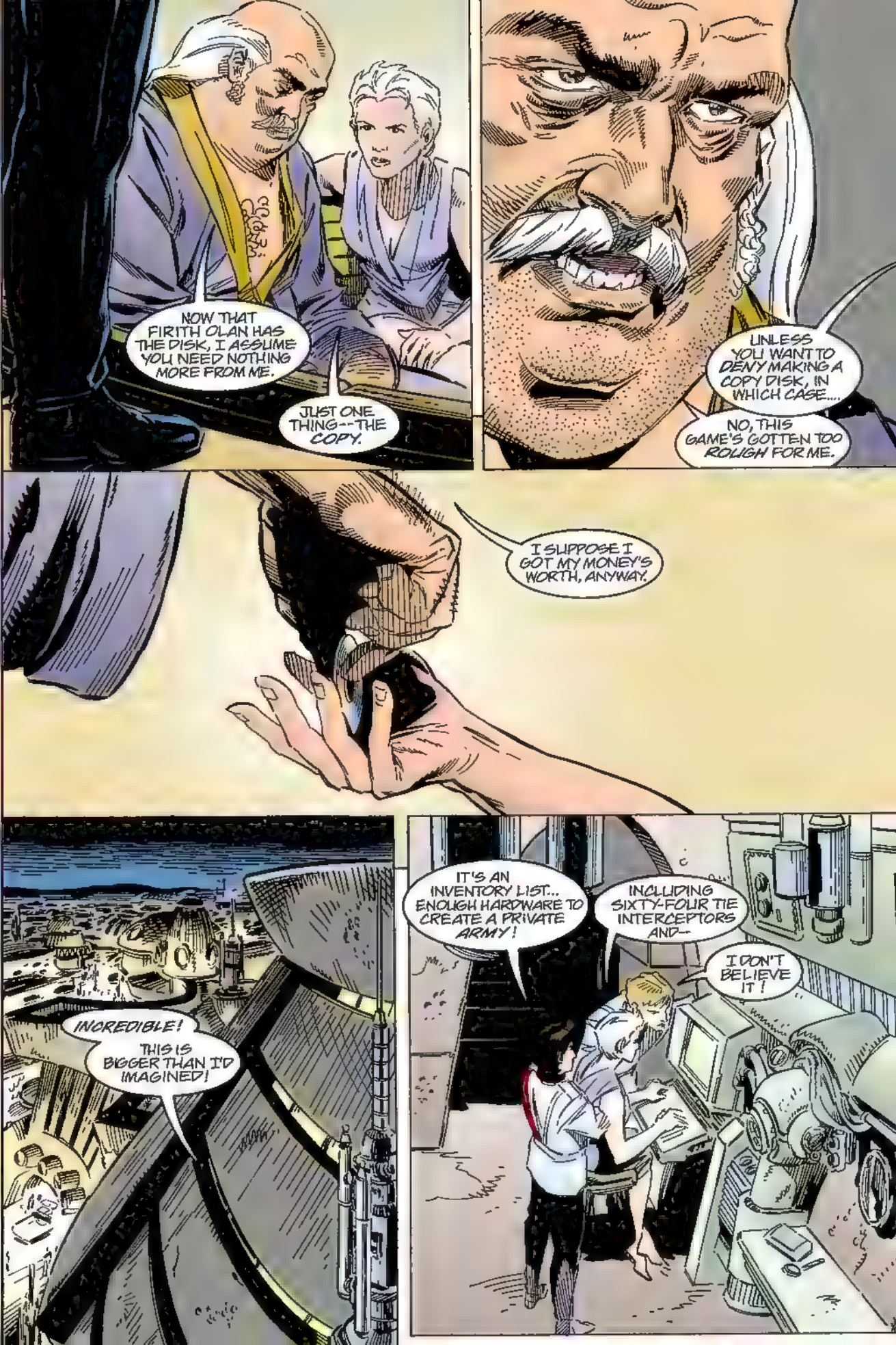


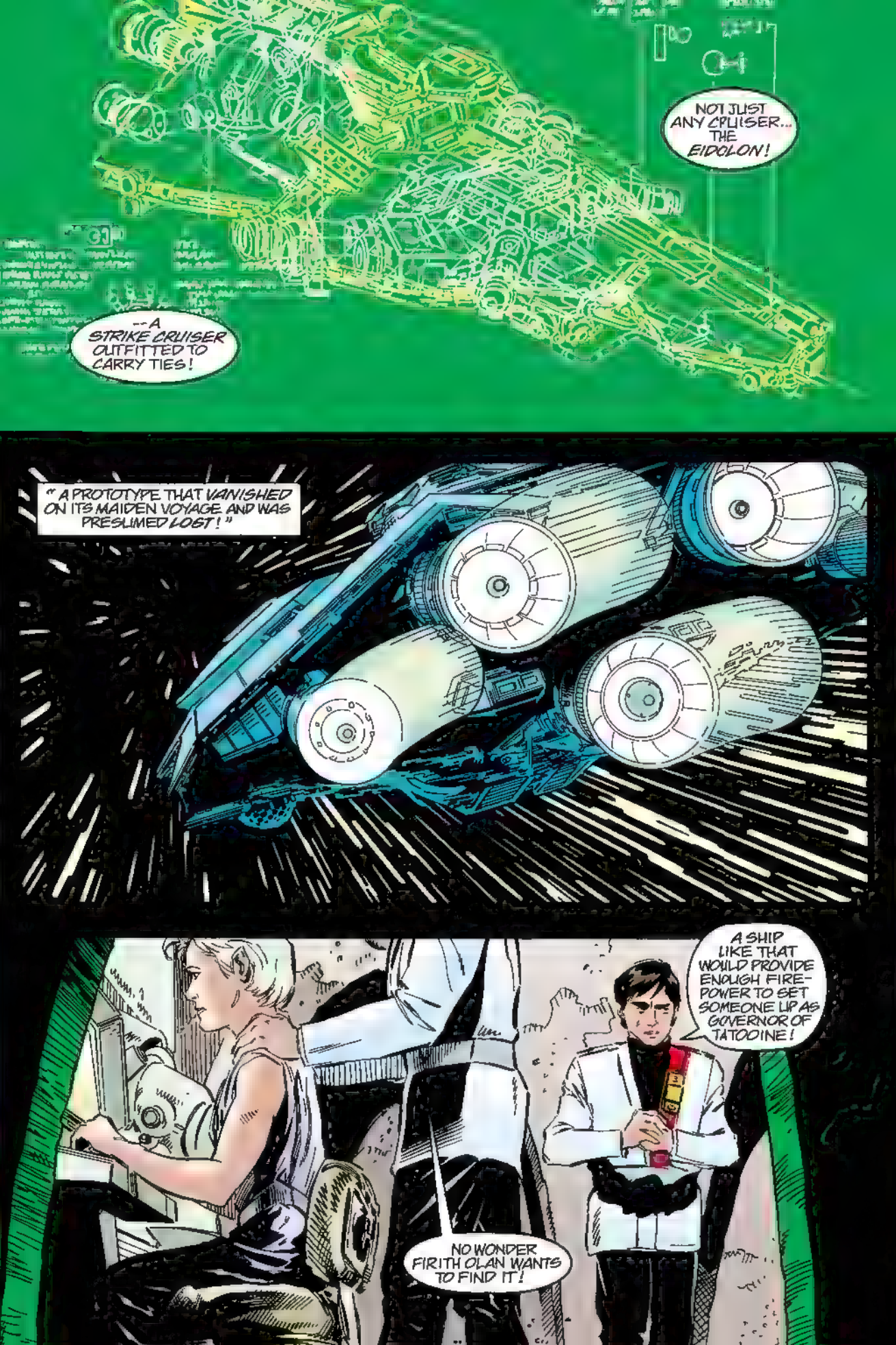
WHUMPF!


RUN, YOU COWARDS, RUN!
SIMMER DOWN, ELSCOL. YOU'LL GET ANOTHER CHANCE AT THEM.
I SEE YOU'VE MET MY PARTNER, KAPP DENDO.
THIS GUY? HE JUST HIRED US TO BUZZ SOME DEW RANCH.
DON'T TELL ME--YOUR "DISTRACTION," WINTER?
I WANT TO HAVE A CHAT WITH HUFF DARKLIGHTER. YOU TWO COME WITH ME. THE REST CAN RETURN TO MOS EISLEY.
MAYBE I'LL JUST GO WITH THE OTHERS AND...
FORGET IT, FLYBOY. YOU GET TO TELL DARKLIGHTER ALL ABOUT HIS SPEEDER.
LUCKY ME.

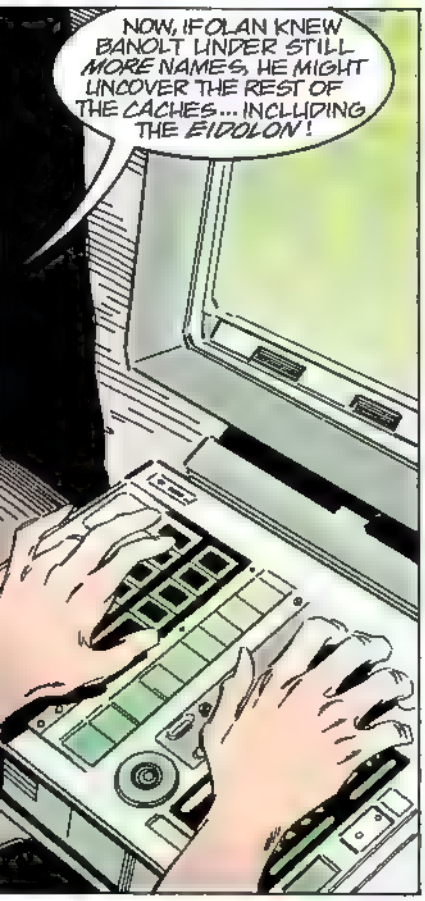

FIRITH OLAN! HE'S A TWI'LEK WITH DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR. THINKS HE CAN STEP IN AND TAKE OVER NOW THAT JABBA'S DEAD.
HE TRIED TO SQUEEZE ME FOR PROTECTION MONEY, BUT I SET UP MY OWN SECURITY FORCE INSTEAD.
THE RAID WAS AN ATTEMPT TO INTIMIDATE ME. THE RODIANS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE ATTACK TO LOOT MY SAFE. END OF STORY.
NOT QUITE.
THE RODIANS WERE AFTER SOMETHING SPECIAL. I NOTICED THEY TOOK A DATA DISK.
YOUR SECURITY FORCE IS EQUIPPED WITH IMPERIAL ARMOR AND WEAPONS. THERE'S BEEN A FLOOD OF SUCH MATERIAL ON THE BLACK MARKET LATELY.
AND ONE NAME IS ON EVERYBODY'S LIPS-- LIRIN BANOLT. ALSO KNOWN AS BRUHAS DREY, RAN NAMMON, KIER DOM--
ENOUGH!

HE CALLED HIMSELF KIER DOM WHEN HE CAME TO ME WITH A DEAL. THE EMPIRE WAS BUILDING A BASE ON TATOOINE.
I'D SEEN THE SUPPLY SHIPS AND KNEW SOMETHING WAS GOING ON.
HE OFFERED TO MAKE ME EXCLUSIVE FOOD VENDOR FOR THE BASE... IN EXCHANGE FOR A HEFTY BRIBE.
HE TOOK MY MONEY AND VANISHED. I SEARCHED HIS COMPOUND AND FOUND THE DATA DISK. IT WAS ENCRYPTED, OF COURSE.
"I HIRED A SLICER TO WORK ON THE CODE. BY APPLYING THE NAME KIER DOM IN A CERTAIN ALGORITHM, HE DISCOVERED A MAP.
"IT LED TO A CACHE OF IMPERIAL WEAPONRY. SOME WENT TO MY SECURITY FORCE. THE REST I SOLD TO THE BLACK MARKET... TO RECOUP MY INVESTMENT IN KIER DOM."

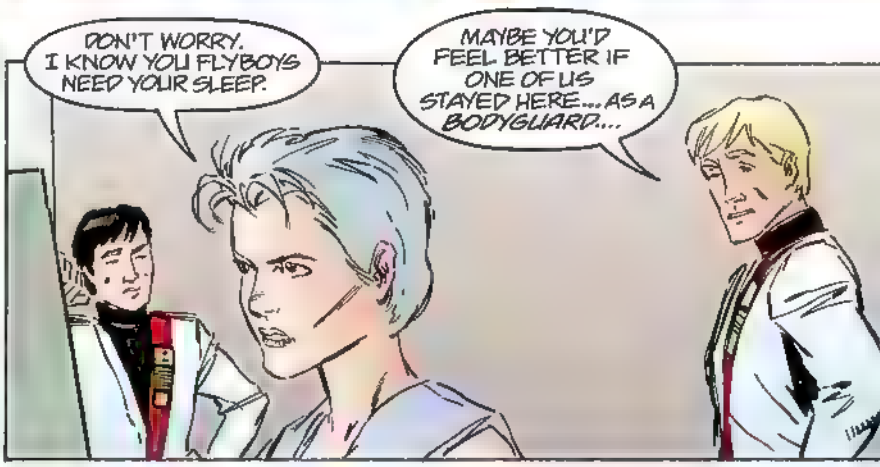

NOW THAT FIRITH OLAN HAS THE DISK, I ASSUME YOU NEED NOTHING MORE FROM ME.
JUST ONE THING--THE COPY.
UNLESS YOU WANT TO DENY MAKING A COPY DISK, IN WHICH CASE....
NO, THIS GAME'S GOTTEN TOO ROUGH FOR ME.
I SUPPOSE I GOT MY MONEY'S WORTH, ANYWAY.
INCREDIBLE!
THIS IS BIGGER THAN I'D IMAGINED!
IT'S AN INVENTORY LIST... ENOUGH HARDWARE TO CREATE A PRIVATE ARMY!
INCLUDING SIXTY-FOUR TIE INTERCEPTORS AND--
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!


--A STRIKE CRUISER OUTFITTED TO CARRY TIES!
NOT JUST ANY CRUISER... THE EIDOLON!
"A PROTOTYPE THAT VANISHED ON ITS MAIDEN VOYAGE AND WAS PRESUMED LOST!"
A SHIP LIKE THAT WOULD PROVIDE ENOUGH FIRE-POWER TO SET SOMEONE UP AS GOVERNOR OF TATOOINE!
NO WONDER FIRITH OLAN WANTS TO FIND IT!

APPLYING THE NAME "LIRIN BANOLT" TO THE DE-CODING ALGORITHM GOT ME THIS LIST. "KIER DOM" REVEALED THE WEAPONS CACHE DARKLIGHTER FOUND.
BUT BANOLT'S *OTHER* KNOWN ALIASES AREN'T TURNING UP A THING!

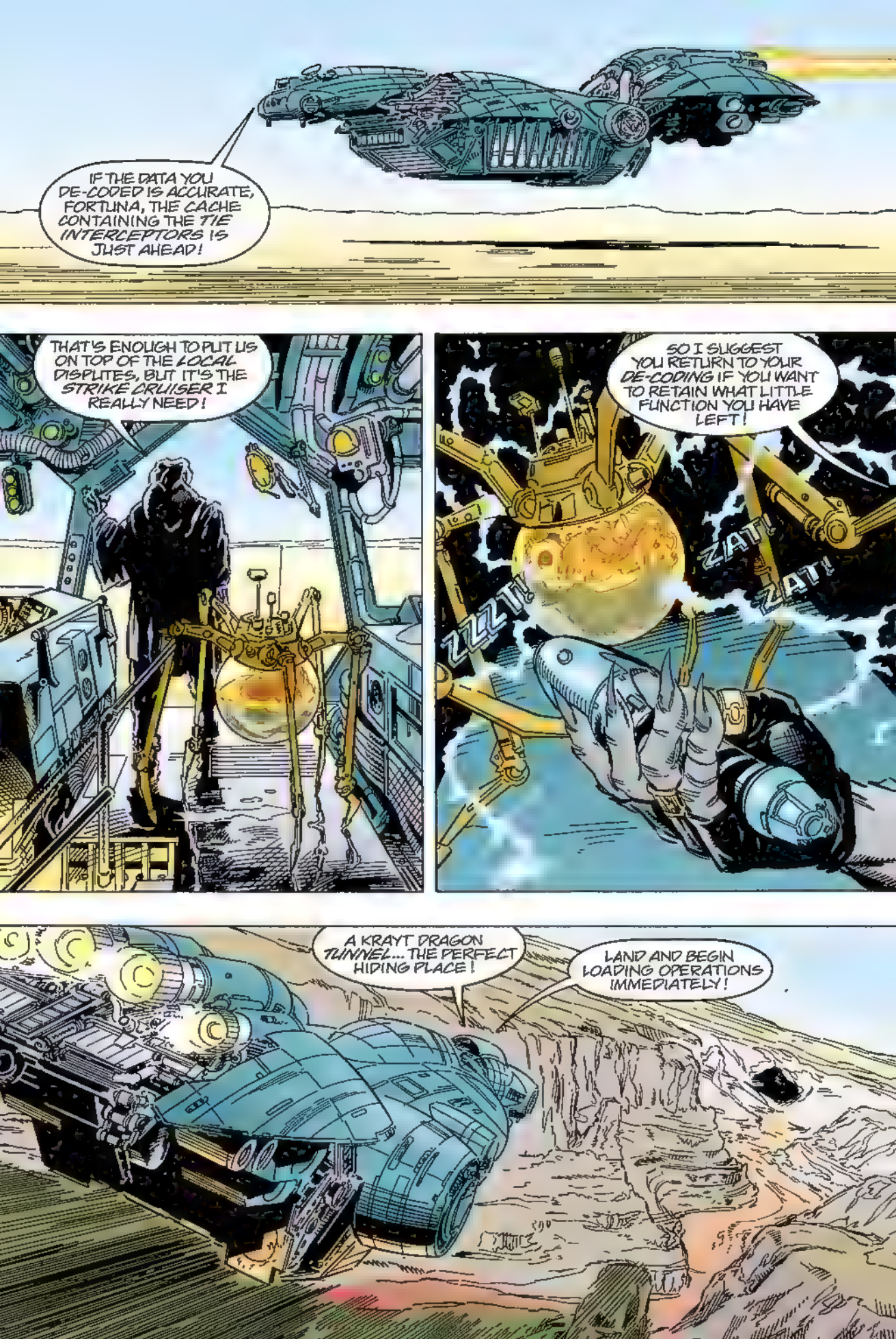

NOW, IF OLAN KNEW BANOLT UNDER STILL *MORE* NAMES, HE MIGHT UNCOVER THE REST OF THE CACHES... INCLUDING THE *EIDOLON*!

I DON'T MEAN TO SEEM *RUDE*, WINTER, BUT IT'S ABOUT SIX HOURS PAST OUR BED-TIME.
IF YOU COME UP WITH ANYTHING, LET US KNOW. OTHERWISE....


DON'T WORRY. I KNOW YOU FLYBOYS NEED YOUR SLEEP.
MAYBE YOU'D FEEL BETTER IF ONE OF US STAYED HERE... AS A *BODYGUARD*....

NO NEED. I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF.
YEAH. I GUESS YOU CAN.

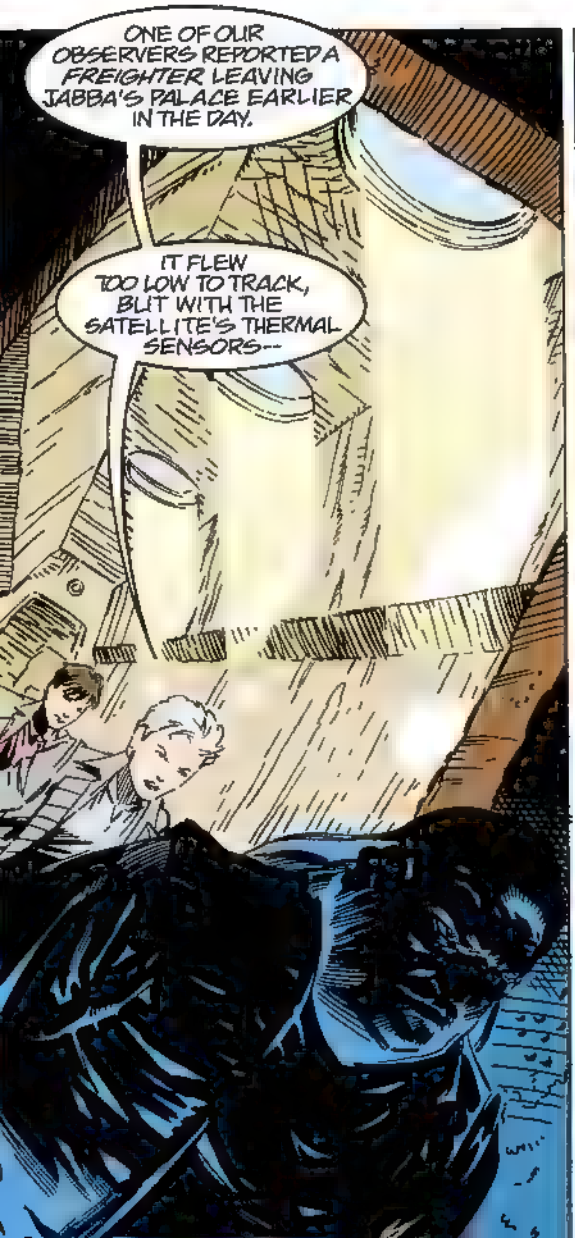
I THINK YOU'VE GOT HER *INTERESTED*, TYCHO. SHE JUST DOESN'T *KNOW* IT YET.

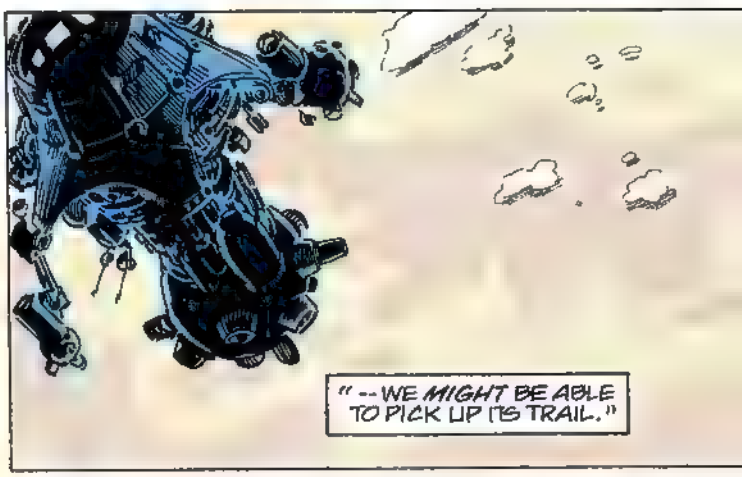

IF THE DATA YOU DE-CODED IS ACCURATE, FORTUNA, THE CACHE CONTAINING THE TIE INTERCEPTORS IS JUST AHEAD!
THAT'S ENOUGH TO PUT US ON TOP OF THE LOCAL DISPUTES, BUT IT'S THE STRIKE CRUISER I REALLY NEED!
SO I SUGGEST YOU RETURN TO YOUR DE-CODING IF YOU WANT TO RETAIN WHAT LITTLE FUNCTION YOU HAVE LEFT!
ZAT!
ZAT!
ZZZT!
A KRAYT DRAGON TUNNEL... THE PERFECT HIDING PLACE!
LAND AND BEGIN LOADING OPERATIONS IMMEDIATELY!

DIDN'T I JUST GET RID OF YOU?!
YOU ALREADY OWE ME A VERY EXPENSIVE SPEEDER FROM LAST NIGHT'S FIASCO! NOW YOU WANT MY WEATHER SATELLITE?!
IT WAS FIRITH OLAN'S RAIDERS WHO DESTROYED YOUR SPEEDER. AS FOR THE SATELLITE--
--WE ONLY NEED TO USE IT FOR A FEW MINUTES. IF OLAN HAS LOCATED ANOTHER WEAPONS CACHE, HE WON'T WASTE ANY TIME BEFORE EMPTYING IT.
IF HE SUCCEEDS IN BUILDING UP A PRIVATE ARMY, YOU'LL FIND THAT PAYING TAXES TO GOVERNOR OLAN COSTS A LOT MORE THAN ANY SPEEDER.
CALL IT "TAXES" OR "PROTECTION MONEY"... I'M USED TO BOTH.
PAYING OFF CORRUPT MEN IS JUST PART OF DOING BUSINESS.

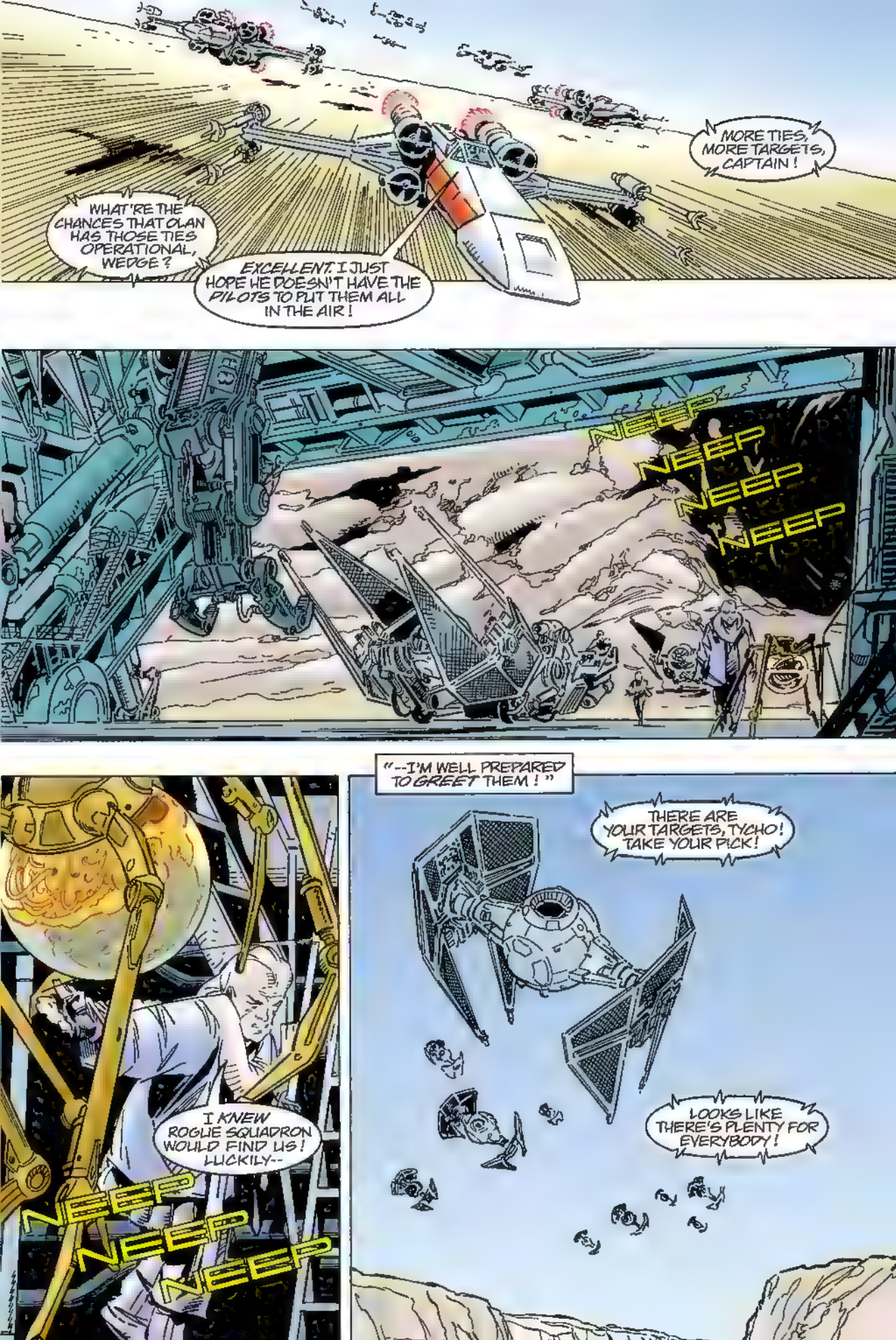
I'D LIKE TO POINT OUT, SIR, THAT YOUR SON BIGGS GAVE HIS LIFE FIGHTING CORRUPT MEN.
NOT EVERYONE CONSIDERS BUSINESS THE BOTTOM LINE.

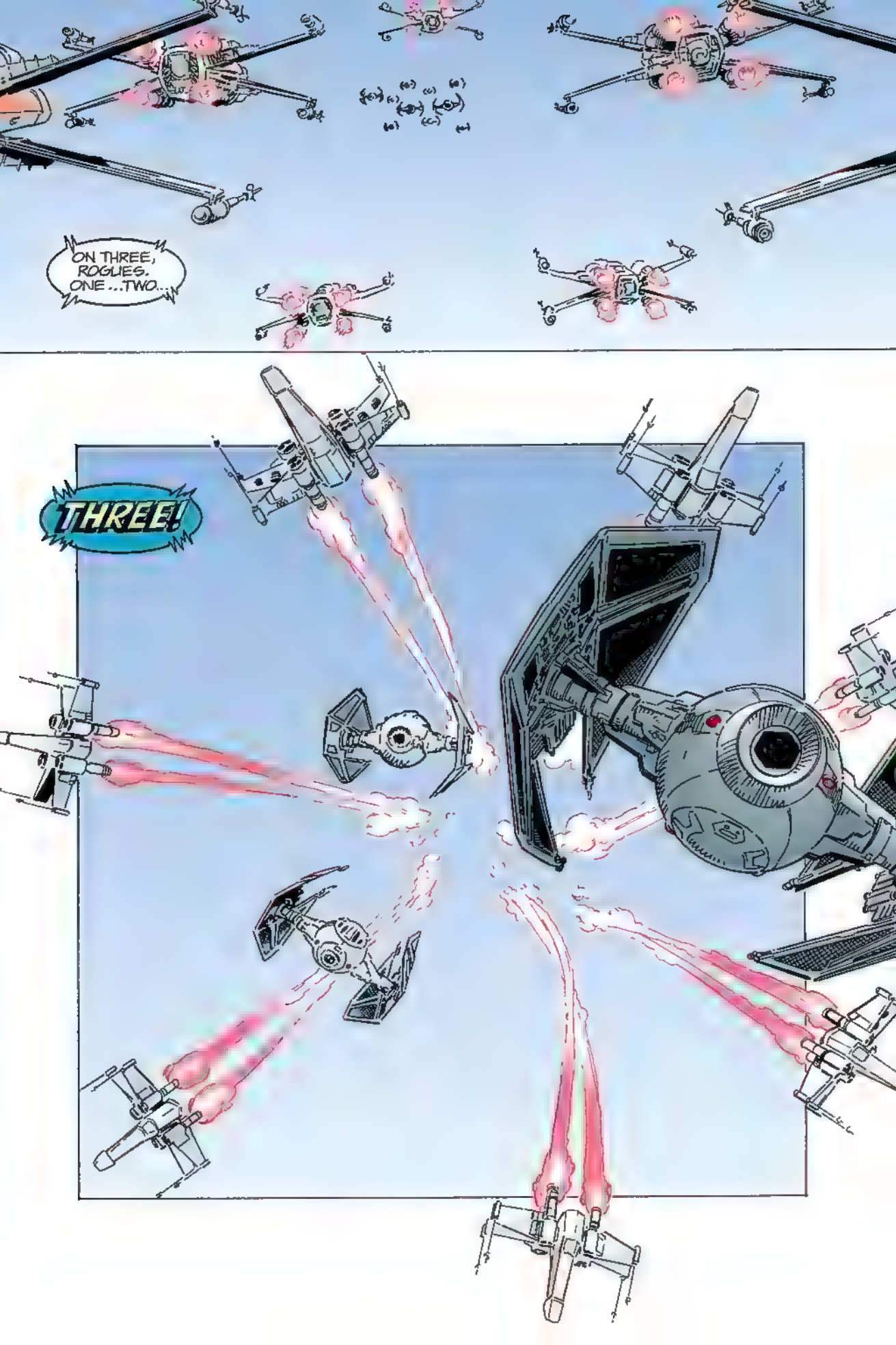
POINT TAKEN.
COME ON THEN, BEFORE I REGAIN MY SENSES AND HAVE YOU KICKED OUT.


ONE OF OUR OBSERVERS REPORTED A FREIGHTER LEAVING JABBA'S PALACE EARLIER IN THE DAY.
IT FLEW TOO LOW TO TRACK, BUT WITH THE SATELLITE'S THERMAL SENSORS--

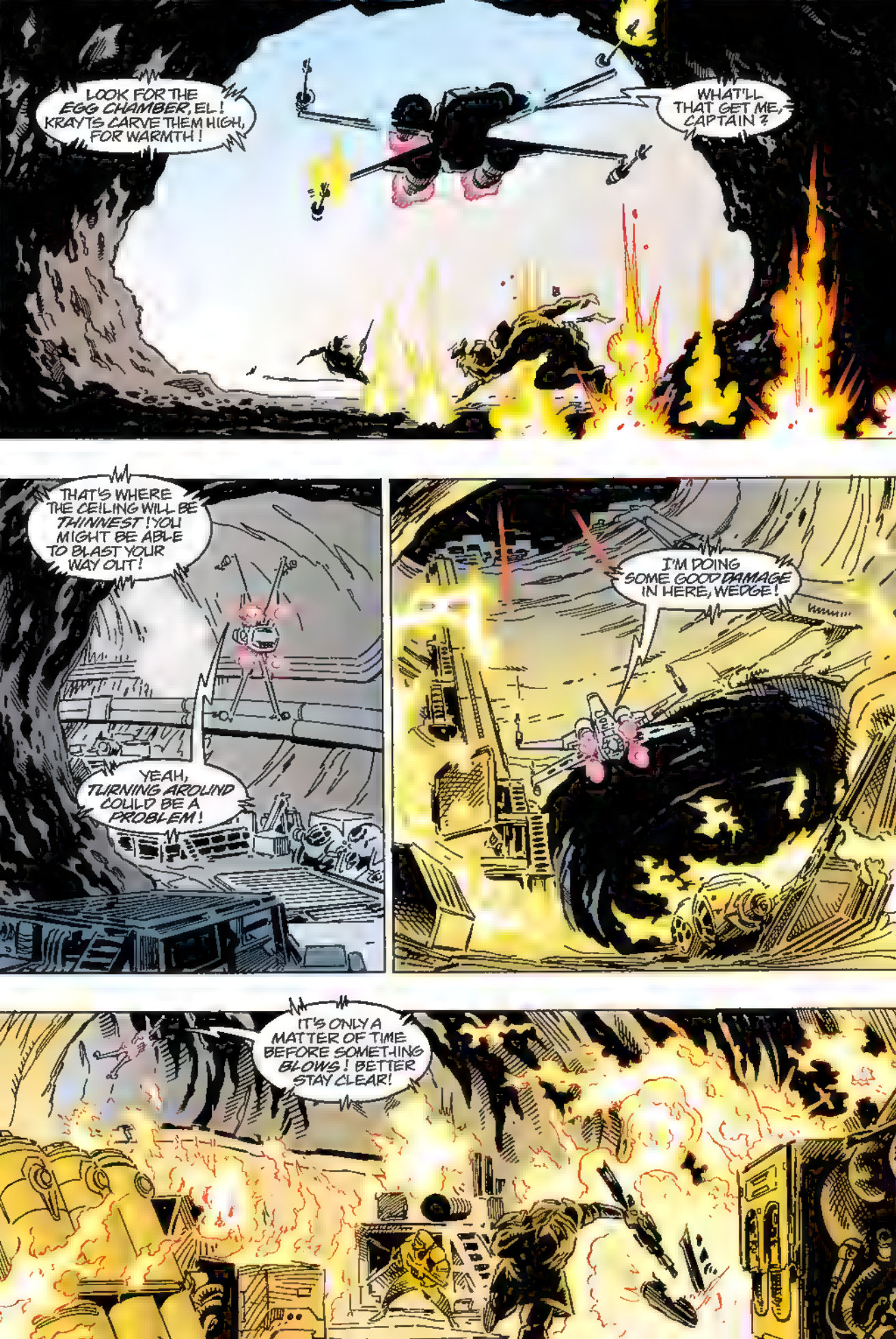

"--WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO PICK UP ITS TRAIL."

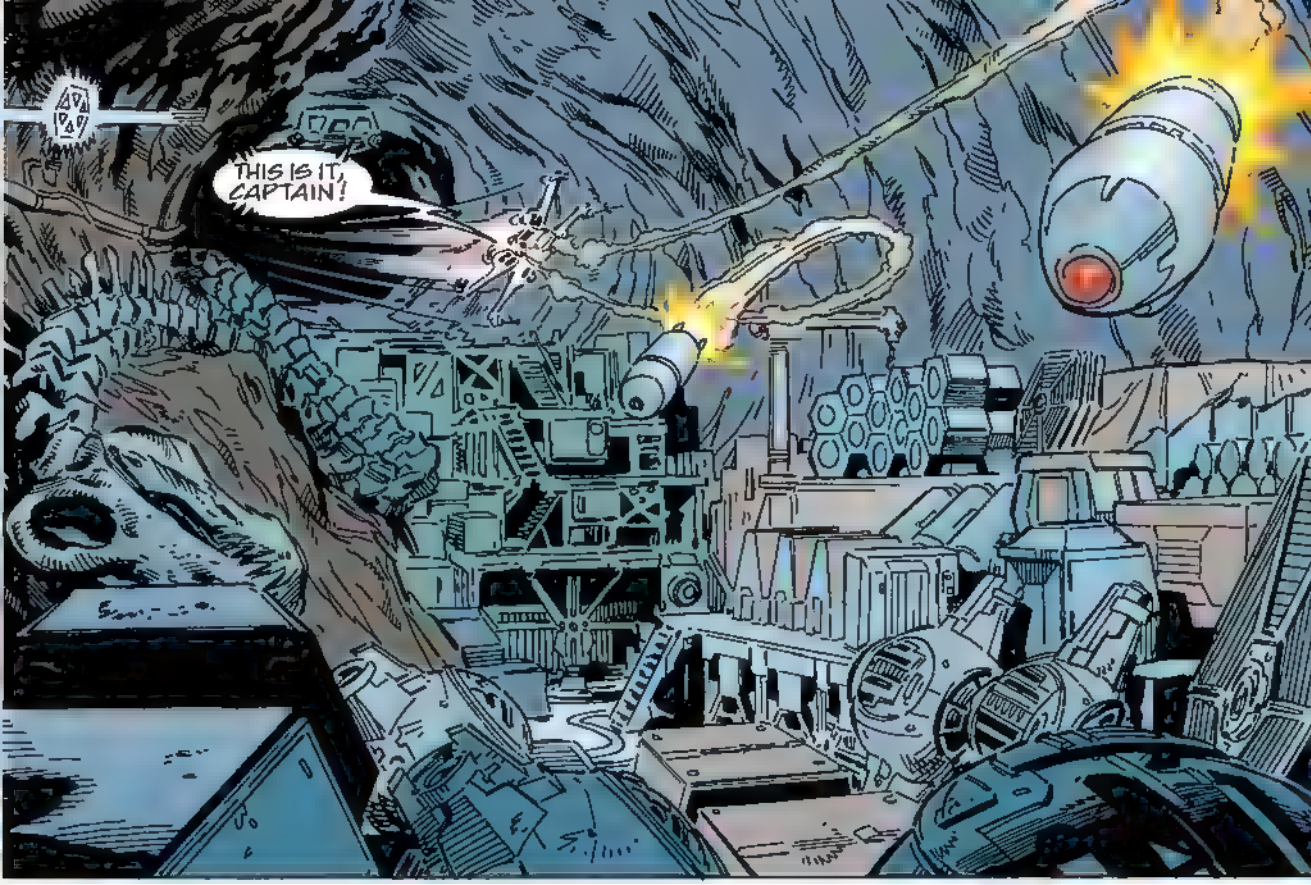
THERE.


MORE TIES, MORE TARGETS, CAPTAIN!
WHAT'RE THE CHANCES THAT OLAN HAS THOSE TIES OPERATIONAL, WEDGE?
EXCELLENT. I JUST HOPE HE DOESN'T HAVE THE PILOTS TO PUT THEM ALL IN THE AIR!
NEEP
NEEP
NEEP
I KNEW ROGUE SQUADRON WOULD FIND US! LUCKILY--
NEEP
NEEP
NEEP
"--I'M WELL PREPARED TO GREET THEM!"
THERE ARE YOUR TARGETS, TYCHO! TAKE YOUR PICK!
LOOKS LIKE THERE'S PLENTY FOR EVERYBODY!

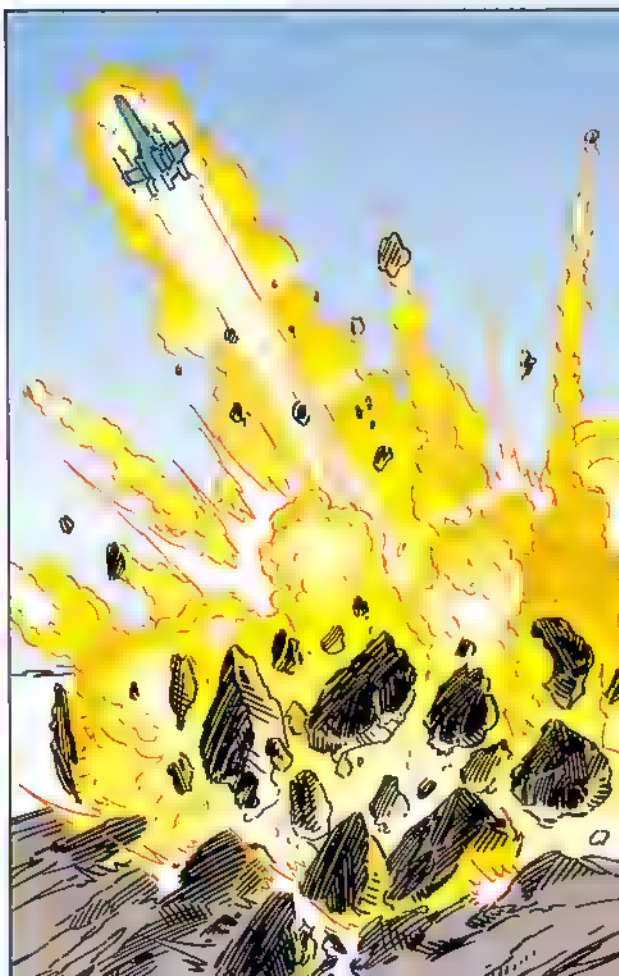

ON THREE, ROGUES. ONE ...TWO...
THREE!

ELSCOL?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
WE'VE CUT THIS GROUP DOWN TO SIZE. I'M GOING TO BREAK THE *REST* OF OLAN'S TOYS!
DON'T! THAT'S A *SUICIDE* RUN!
SORRY--I DON'T HAVE TIME TO LEAVE A *NOTE*!

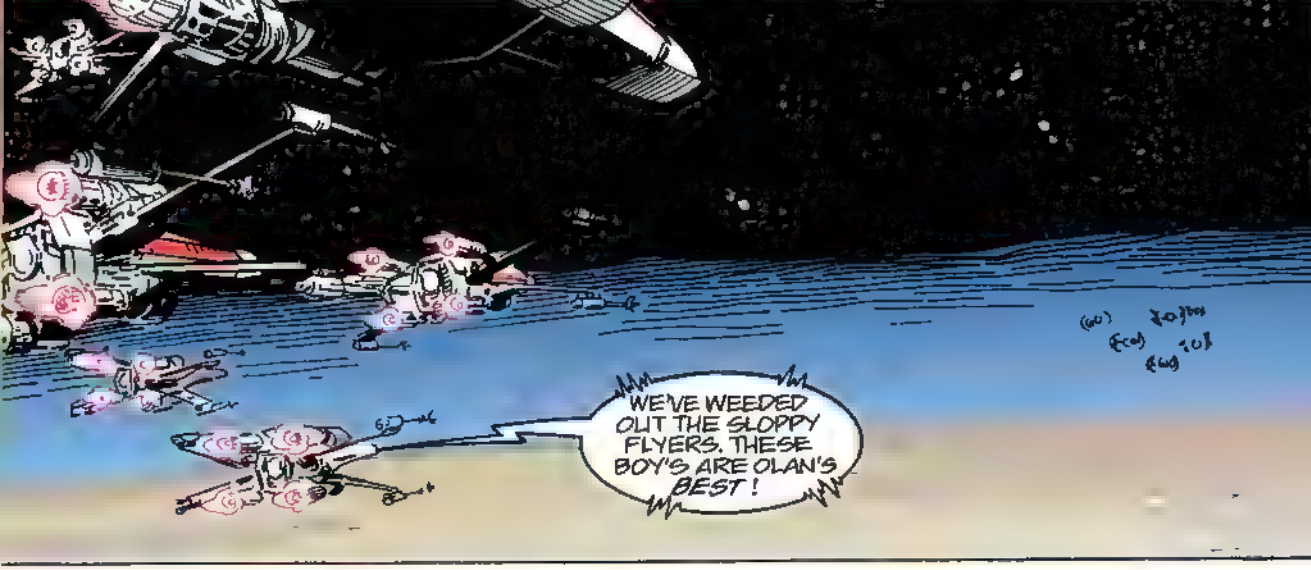

LOOK FOR THE EGG CHAMBER, EL! KRAYTS CARVE THEM HIGH, FOR WARMTH!
WHAT'LL THAT GET ME, CAPTAIN?
THAT'S WHERE THE CEILING WILL BE THINNEST! YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO BLAST YOUR WAY OUT!
YEAH, TURNING AROUND COULD BE A PROBLEM!
I'M DOING SOME GOOD DAMAGE IN HERE, WEDGE!
IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE SOMETHING BLOWS! BETTER STAY CLEAR!

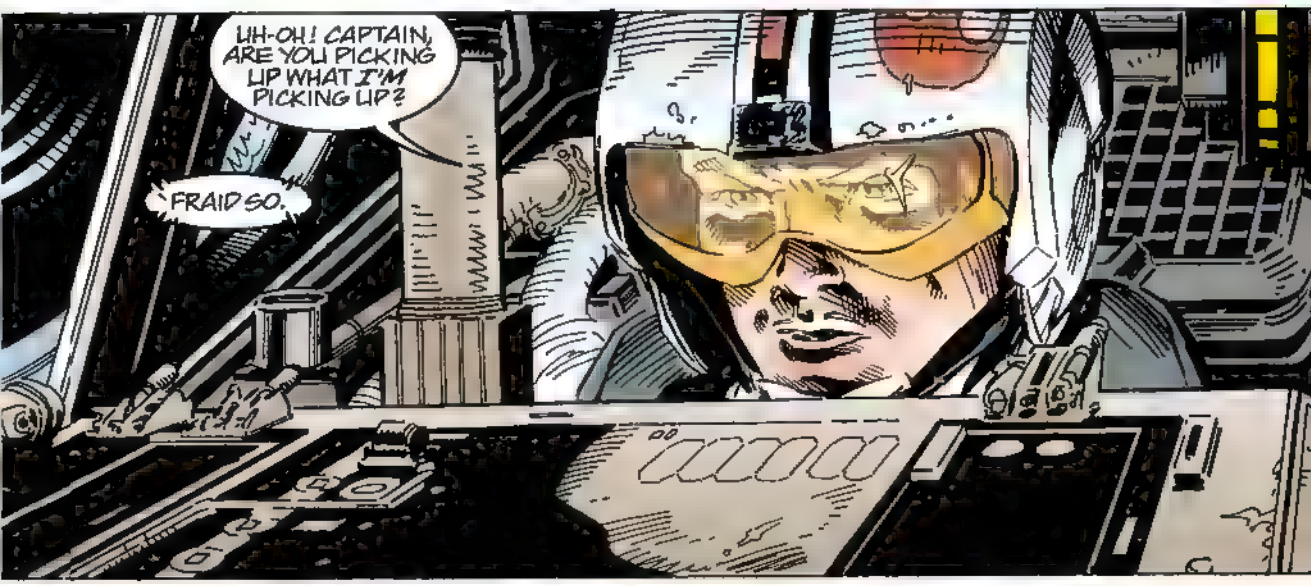

THIS IS IT, CAPTAIN!

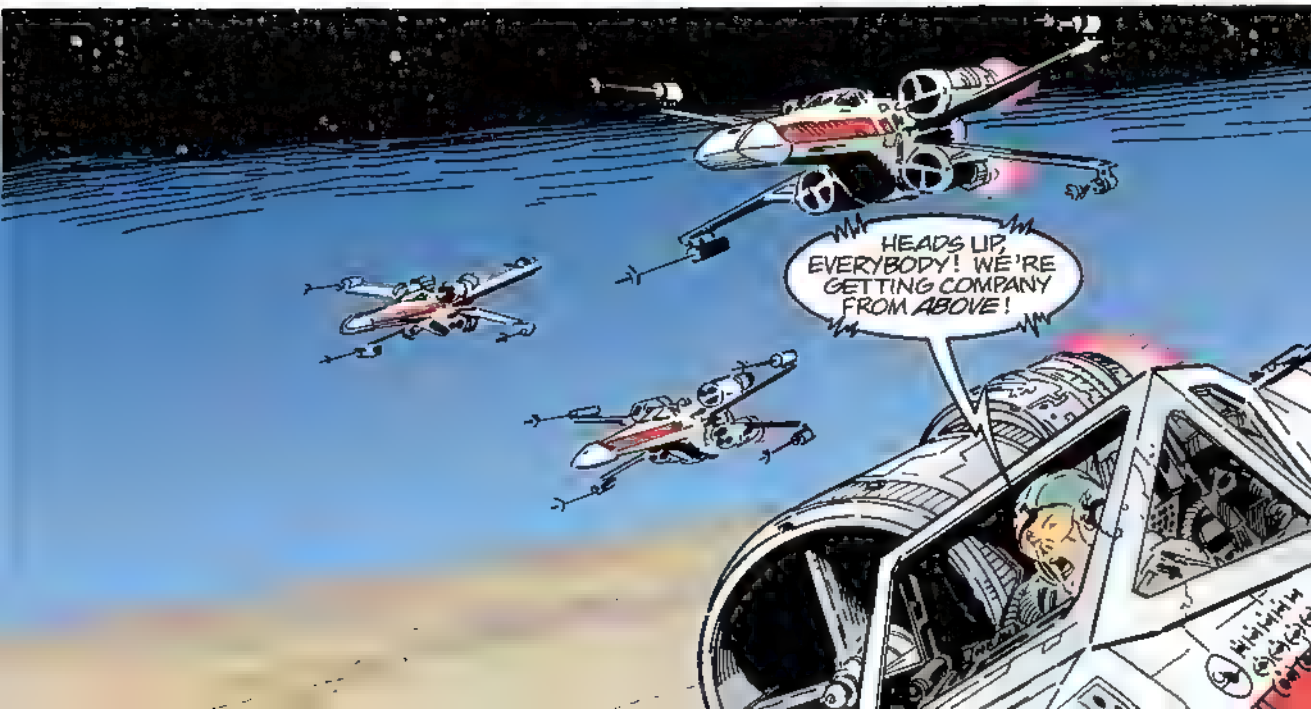
IF THIS WORKS, LINCH IS ON ME!



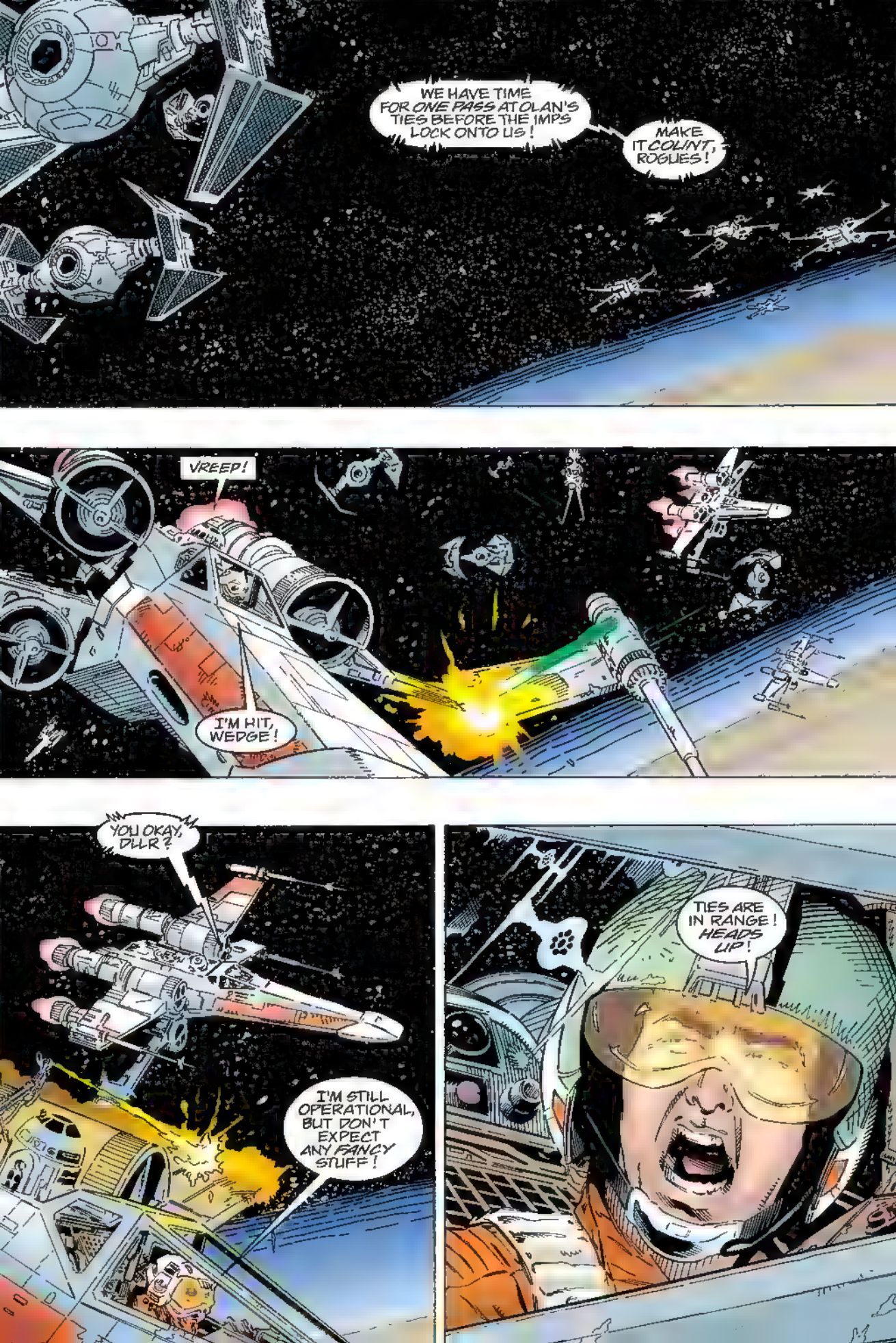
REGROUP, EL!
DON'T I EVEN RATE A "WELL DONE"?
WE'LL TALK ABOUT THAT LATER!
OLAN'S GOT HIS FREIGHTER AND FOUR MORE TIES IN THE AIR! I NEED MY SQUAD AT FULL STRENGTH!
YES, SIR, CAPTAIN ANTILLES, SIR.


WE'VE WEEDED OUT THE SLOPPY FLYERS. THESE BOY'S ARE OLAN'S BEST!


UH-OH! CAPTAIN, ARE YOU PICKING UP WHAT I'M PICKING UP?
I'FRAID SO.


HEADS UP, EVERYBODY! WE'RE GETTING COMPANY FROM ABOVE!

AN IMPERIAL SQUADRON!
THIS DOES NOT LOOK GOOD..


WE HAVE TIME FOR ONE PASS AT OLAN'S TIES BEFORE THE IMPS LOCK ONTO US!
MAKE IT COUNT, ROGUES!
VREEP!
I'M HIT, WEDGE!
YOU OKAY, DLLR?
I'M STILL OPERATIONAL, BUT DON'T EXPECT ANY FANCY STUFF!
TIES ARE IN RANGE! HEADS UP!

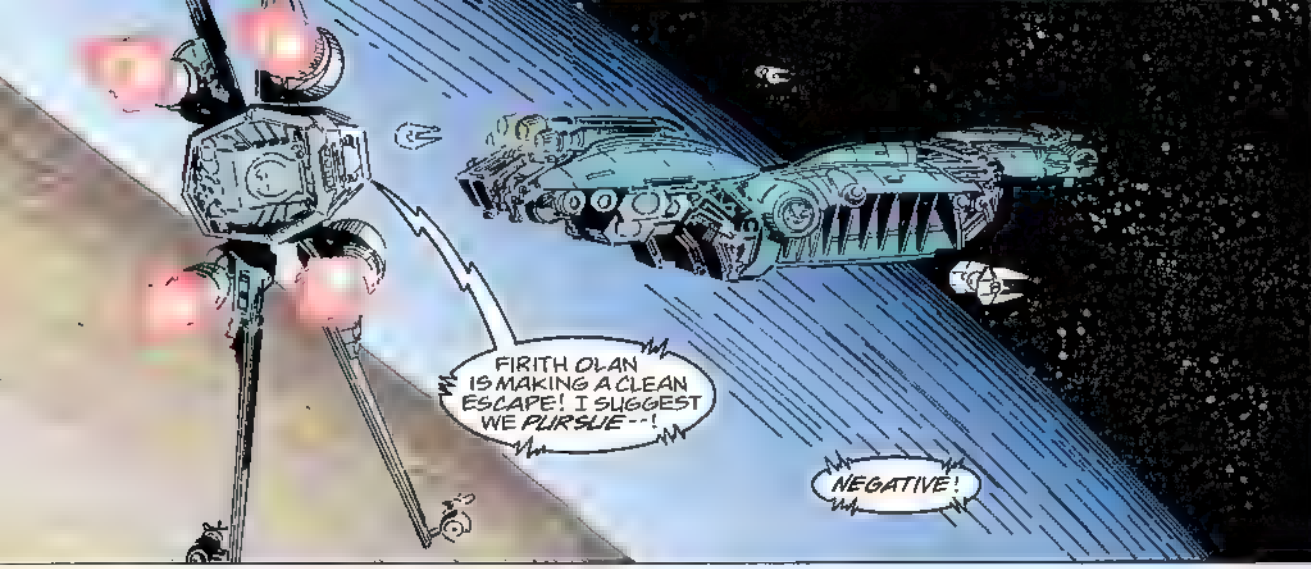
THE IMPS ARE AFTER OLAN'S *INTERCEPTORS*! THEY DON'T CARE ABOUT *US* AT ALL!

YEAH, *FOR NOW*!

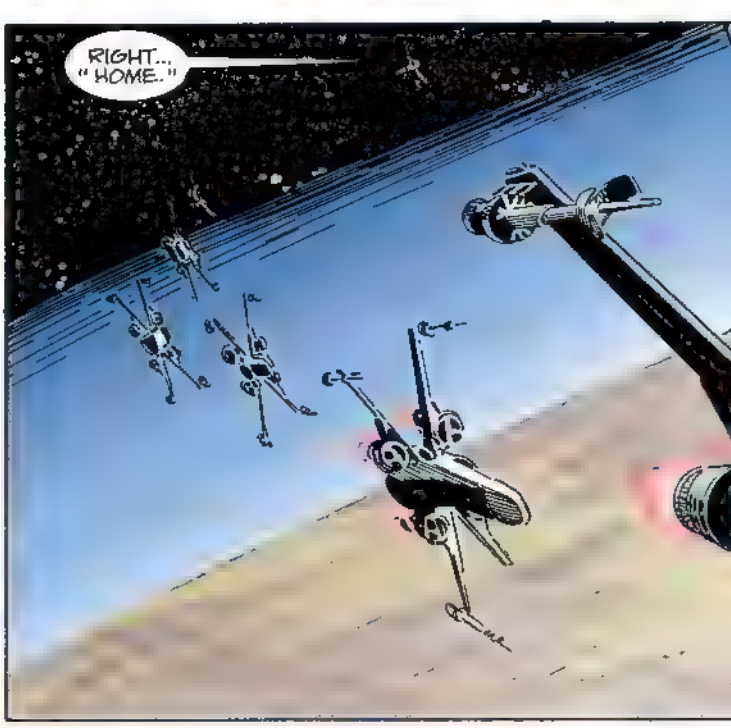
I'M CALLING THIS ONE *MISSION ACCOMPLISHED*! BREAK OFF AND RETURN TO MOS EISLEY!

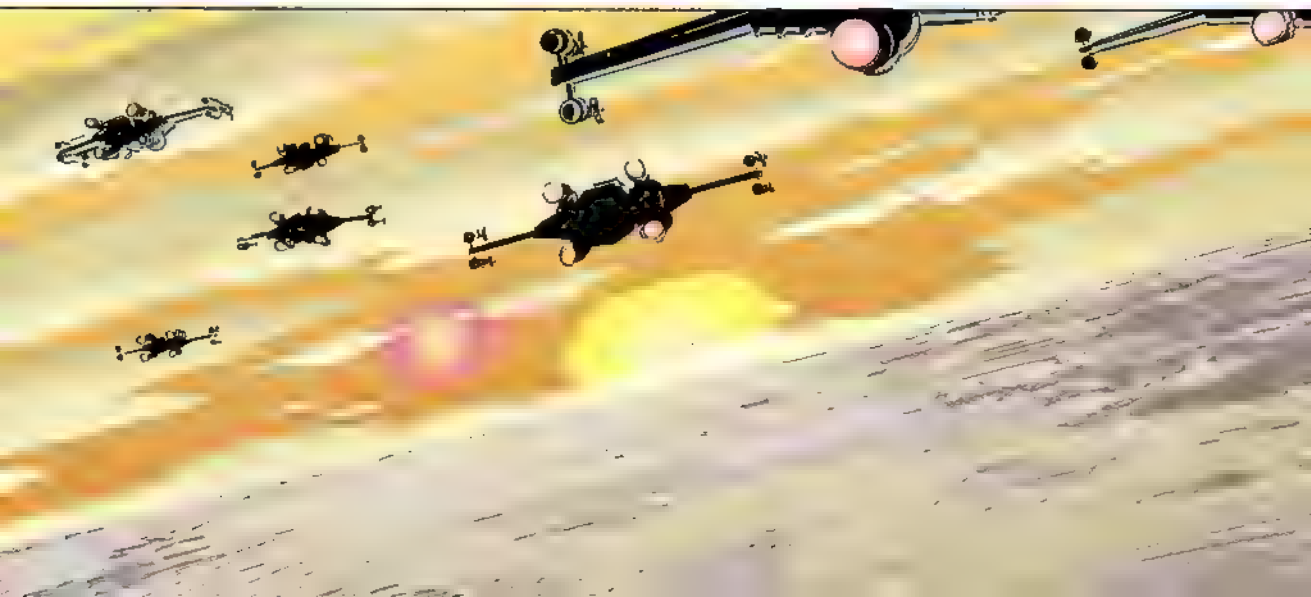
WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, CAPTAIN...

YES, ELSCOL.

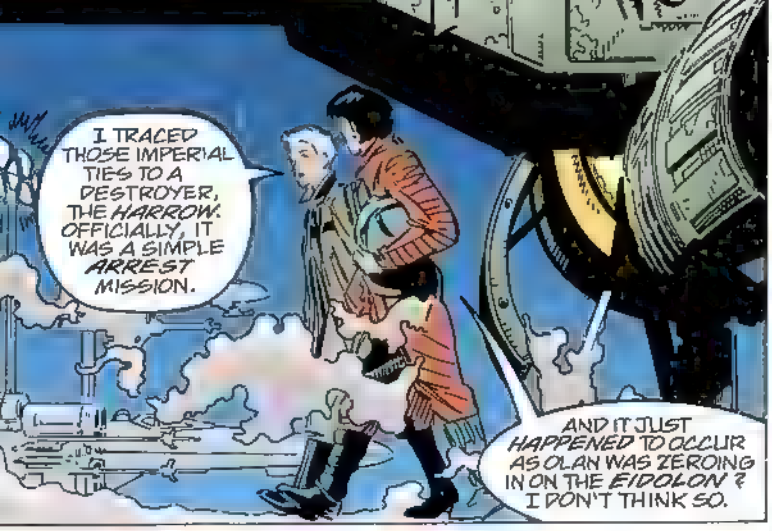

FIRITH OLAN IS MAKING A CLEAN ESCAPE! I SUGGEST WE PURSUE--!
NEGATIVE!

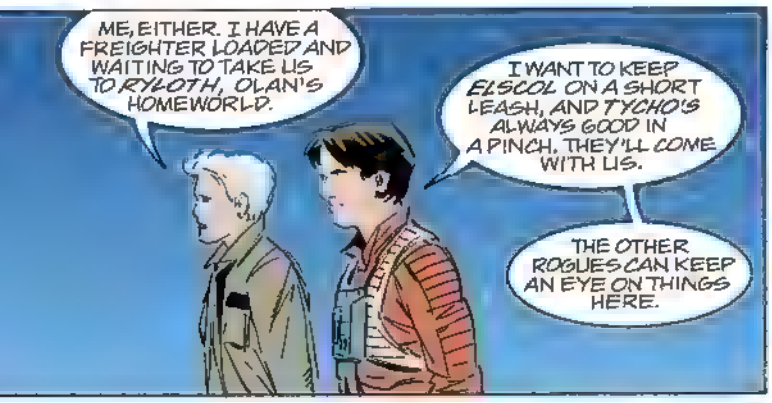
WE GOT A LUCKY BREAK. IT'S TIME TO GO HOME.


RIGHT... "HOME."

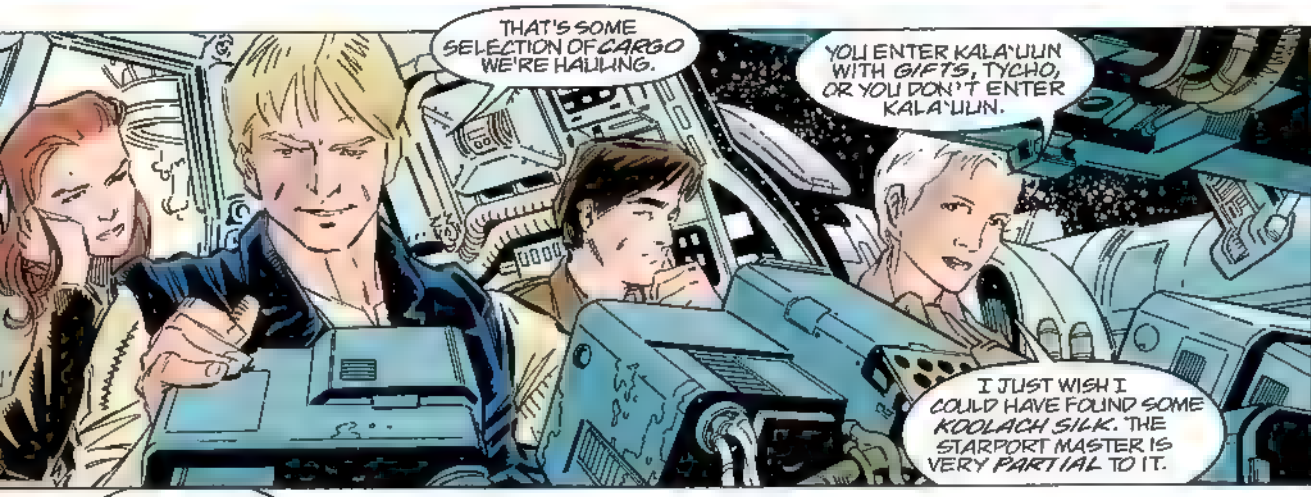


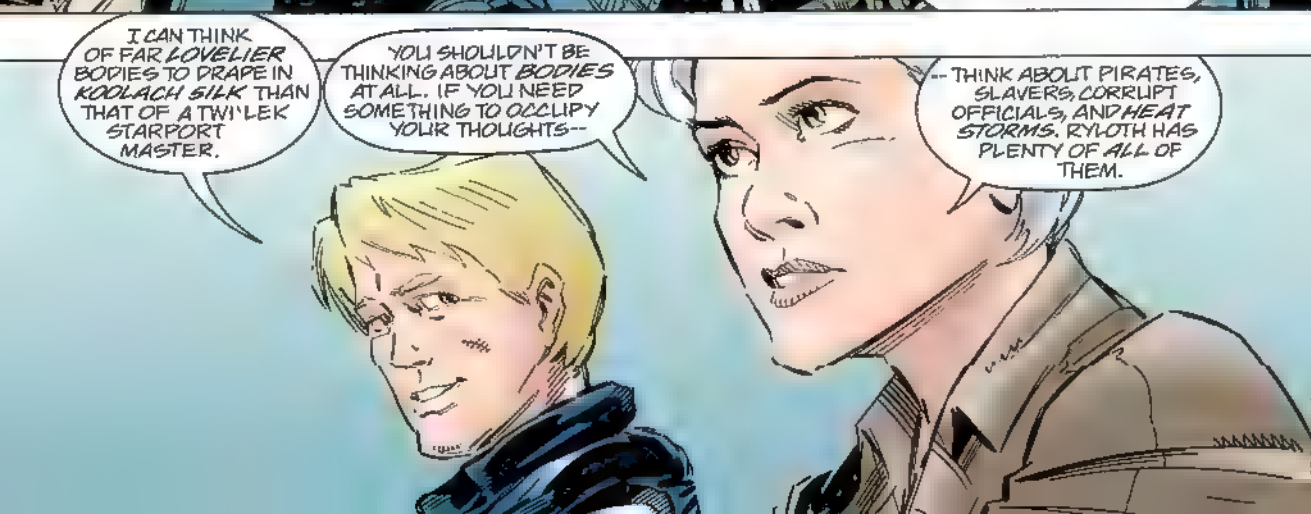
CAPTAIN! OLAN'S FREIGHTER IS PREPARING TO JUMP TO LIGHTSPEED! IF WE'RE GOING TO INTERCEPT--!
TOO RISKY! I WANT THE RENEGADE ALIVE.
THERE IS ONLY ONE PLACE THAT WILL GRANT HIM SANCTUARY--RYLOTH!
I HAVE SET COURSE FOR THE SPACEPORT AT KALA'ULIN.
THE OLAN CLAN IS WEALTHY AND POWERFUL. OBTAINING FIRITH OLAN'S RELEASE MAY INVOLVE CERTAIN... SACRIFICES.
I EXPECT YOU TO DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE OUR GOAL.
YES, CAPTAIN SEMTIN.

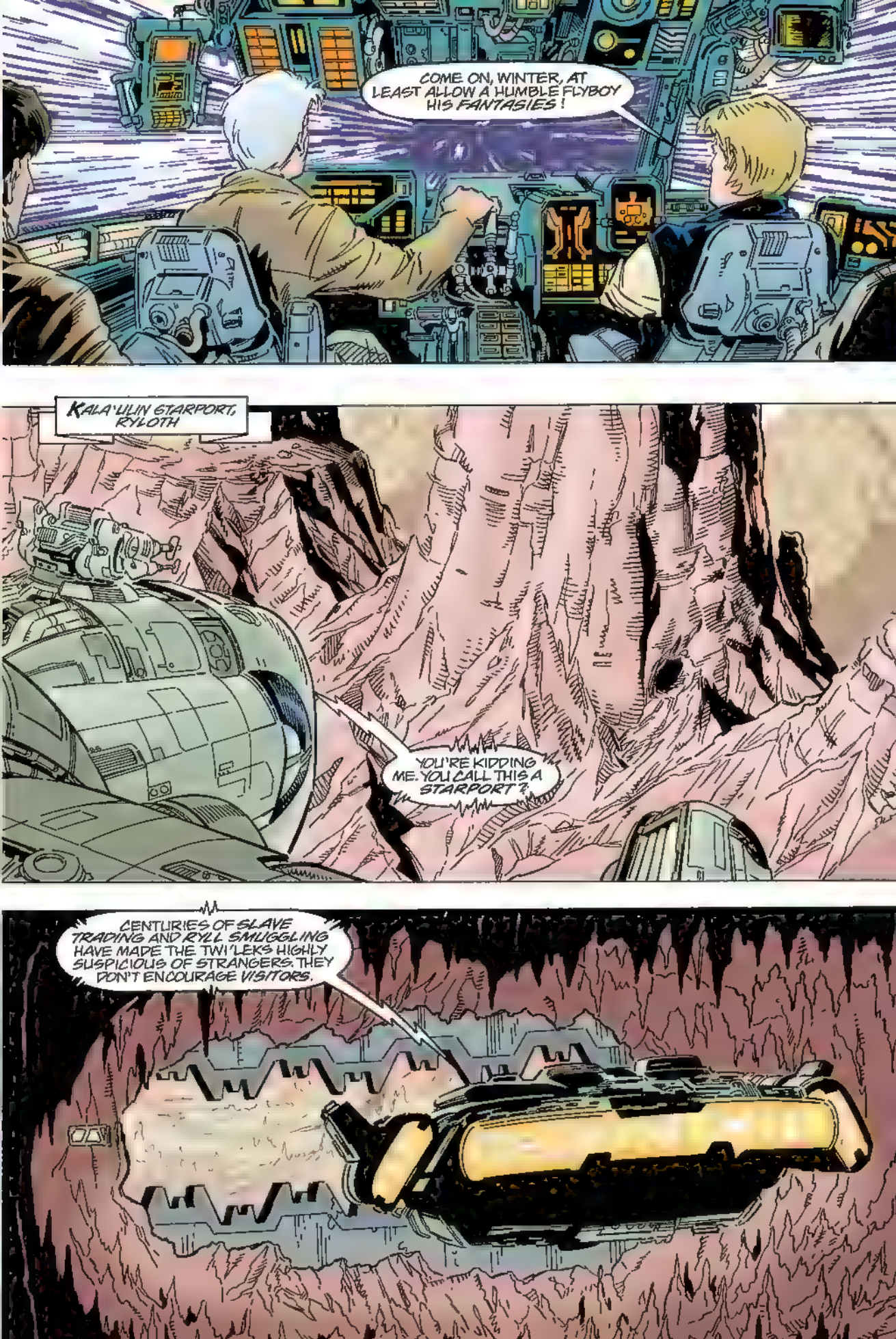

I TRACED THOSE IMPERIAL TIES TO A DESTROYER, THE *HARROW*. OFFICIALLY, IT WAS A SIMPLE *ARREST* MISSION.
AND IT JUST *HAPPENED* TO OCCUR AS OLAN WAS ZEROING IN ON THE *EIDOLON*? I DON'T THINK SO.


ME, EITHER. I HAVE A FREIGHTER LOADED AND WAITING TO TAKE US TO *RYLOTH*, OLAN'S HOMEWORLD.
I WANT TO KEEP *ELSCOL* ON A SHORT LEASH, AND *TYCHO'S* ALWAYS GOOD IN A PINCH. THEY'LL COME WITH US.
THE OTHER ROGUES CAN KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS HERE.

A USED BEAM DRILL... A PAIR OF LANDSPEEDERS.. FOUR PANES OF TRANSPARISTEEL..
SPICES... HYDRAULIC PUMPS... DRIED RONK MEAT (MALE)..

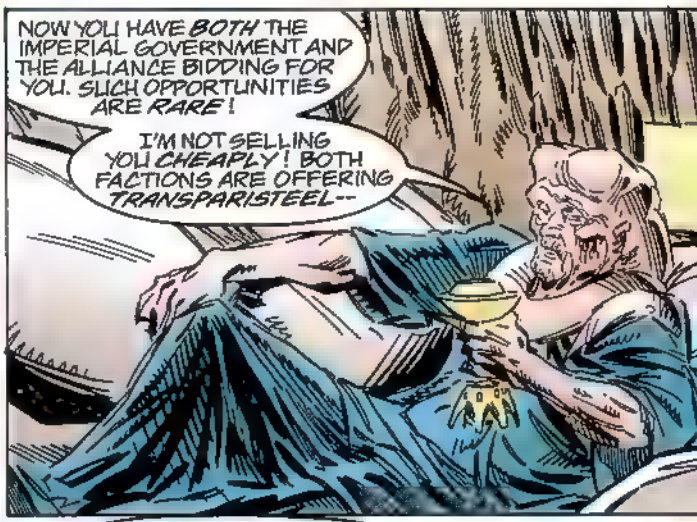

THAT'S SOME SELECTION OF *CARGO* WE'RE HAULING.
YOU ENTER KALA'UUN WITH *GIFTS*, TYCHO, OR YOU DON'T ENTER KALA'UUN.
I JUST WISH I COULD HAVE FOUND SOME *KOOLACH SILK*. THE STARPORT MASTER IS VERY *PARTIAL* TO IT.


I CAN THINK OF FAR *LOVELIER* BODIES TO DRAPE IN *KOOLACH SILK* THAN THAT OF A TWI'LEK STARPORT MASTER.
YOU SHOULDN'T BE THINKING ABOUT *BODIES* AT ALL. IF YOU NEED SOMETHING TO OCCUPY YOUR THOUGHTS--
-- THINK ABOUT PIRATES, SLAVERS, CORRUPT OFFICIALS, AND *HEAT STORMS*. RYLOTH HAS PLENTY OF *ALL* OF THEM.

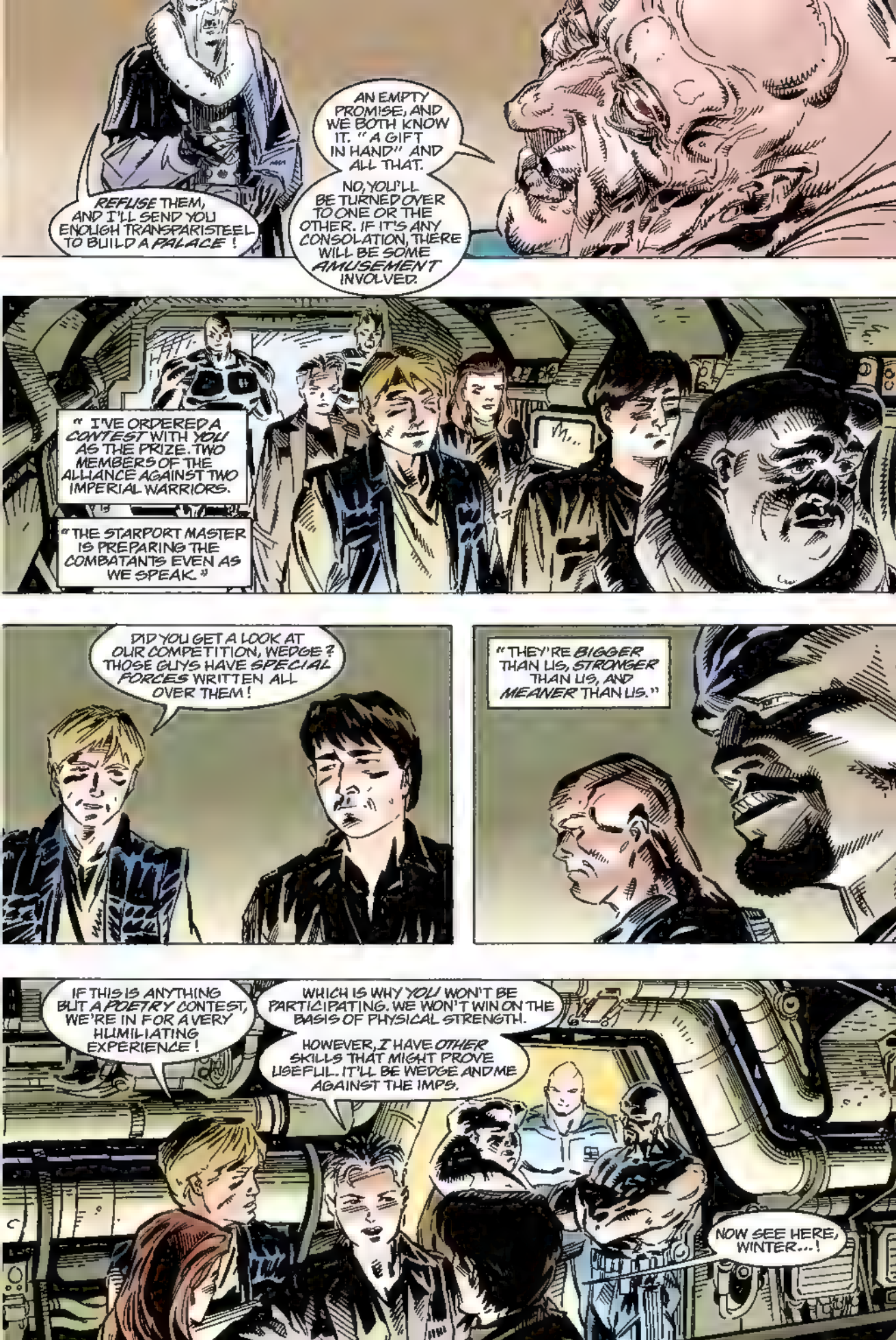

COME ON, WINTER, AT LEAST ALLOW A HUMBLE FLYBOY HIS FANTASIES!
KALA'ULIN STARPORT, RYLOTH
YOU'RE KIDDING ME. YOU CALL THIS A STARPORT?
CENTURIES OF SLAVE TRADING AND RYLL SMUGGLING HAVE MADE THE TWI'LEKS HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS OF STRANGERS. THEY DON'T ENCOURAGE VISITORS.

HERE COMES KOH'SHAK, THE STARPORT MASTER, TO COLLECT HIS "DOCKING FEE."
ONE OF THE LANDSPEEDERS SHOULD BUY US A MEETING WITH CAZNE'OLAN, THE HEAD OF THE OLAN CLAN. THEN THE REAL NEGOTIATIONS START.

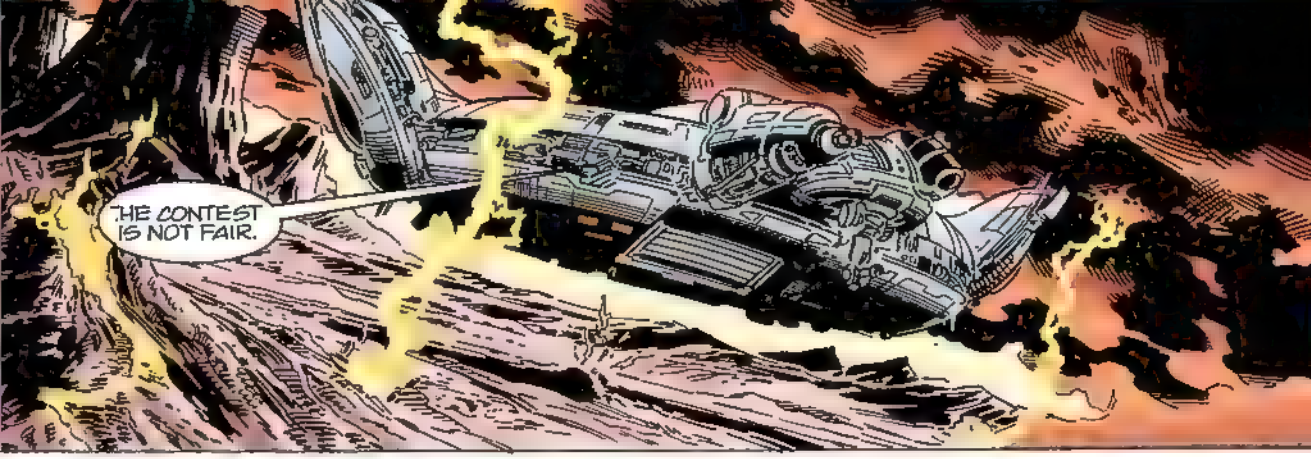
BUT YOU CAN'T DENY ME SANCTUARY, CAZNE! YOU AND I ARE OF THE SAME CLAN!
I KNOW HOW YOU THINK, FIRITH. WHEN YOU HAVE TO COME TO KALA'UUN, WE HAVE TO LET YOU IN.

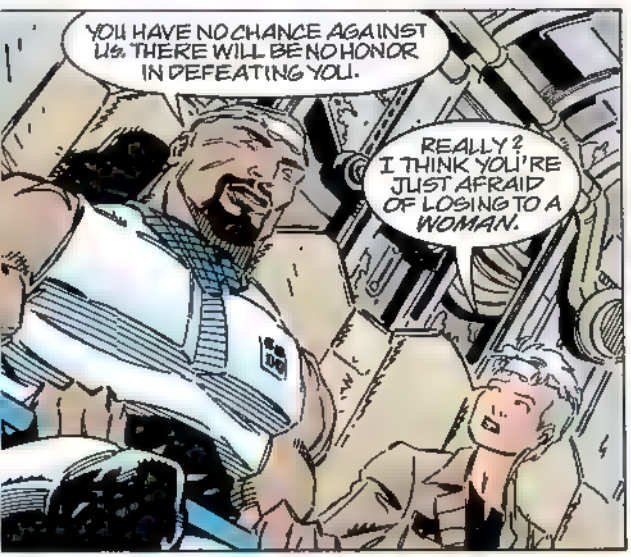

NOW YOU HAVE BOTH THE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT AND THE ALLIANCE BIDDING FOR YOU. SUCH OPPORTUNITIES ARE RARE!
I'M NOT SELLING YOU CHEAPLY! BOTH FACTIONS ARE OFFERING TRANSPARISTEEL--

--THE ONLY CLEAR SUBSTANCE THAT CAN WITHSTAND THE HEAT STORMS OF RYLOTH! THEY'RE OFFERING ME WINDOWS, FIRITH, WINDOWS!

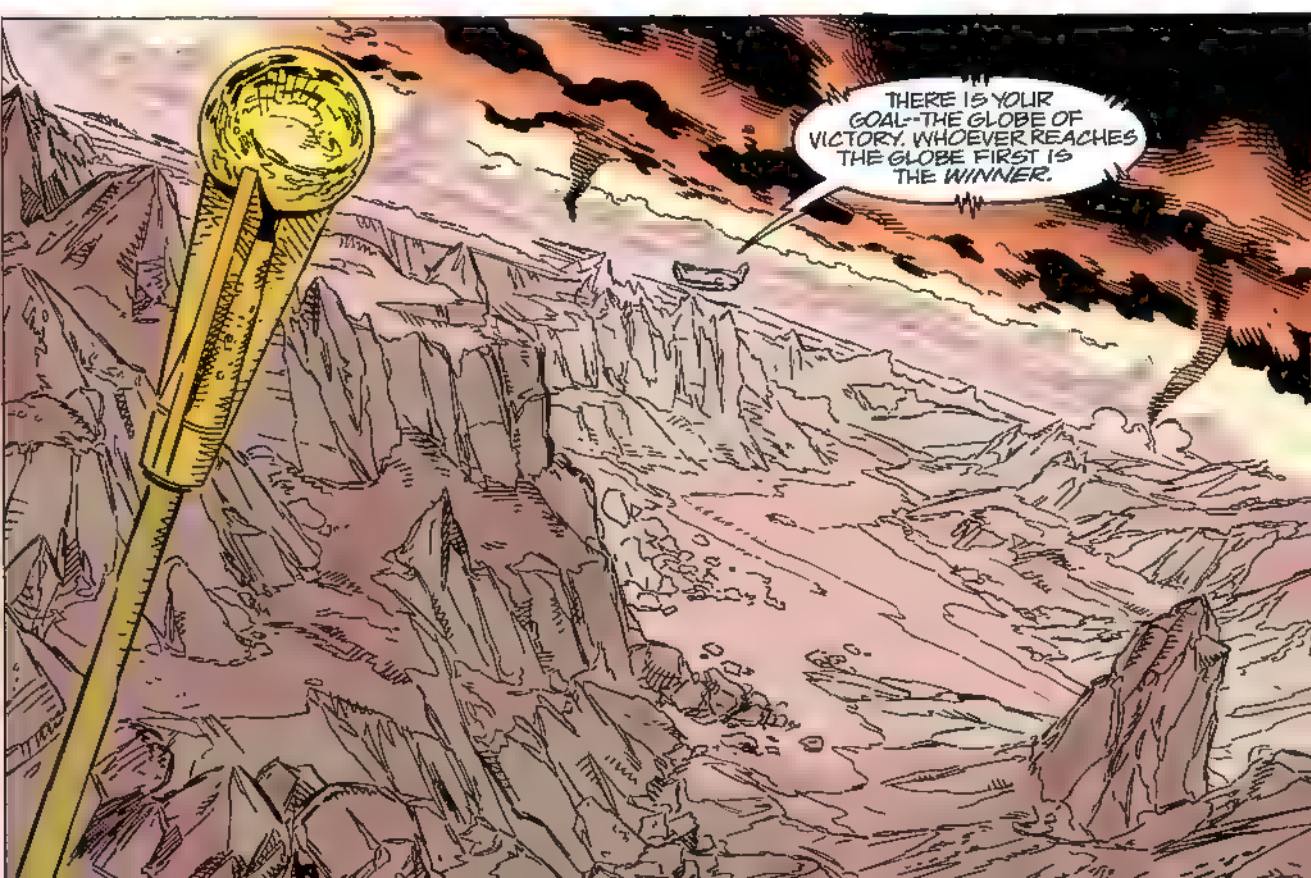

REFUSE THEM, AND I'LL SEND YOU ENOUGH TRANSPARISTEEL TO BUILD A PALACE!
AN EMPTY PROMISE, AND WE BOTH KNOW IT. "A GIFT IN HAND" AND ALL THAT.
NO, YOU'LL BE TURNED OVER TO ONE OR THE OTHER. IF IT'S ANY CONSOLATION, THERE WILL BE SOME AMUSEMENT INVOLVED.
"I'VE ORDERED A CONTEST WITH YOU AS THE PRIZE. TWO MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE AGAINST TWO IMPERIAL WARRIORS.
"THE STARPORT MASTER IS PREPARING THE COMBATANTS EVEN AS WE SPEAK."
DID YOU GET A LOOK AT OUR COMPETITION, WEDGE? THOSE GUYS HAVE SPECIAL FORCES WRITTEN ALL OVER THEM!
"THEY'RE BIGGER THAN US, STRONGER THAN US, AND MEANER THAN US."
IF THIS IS ANYTHING BUT A POETRY CONTEST, WE'RE IN FOR A VERY HUMILIATING EXPERIENCE!
WHICH IS WHY YOU WON'T BE PARTICIPATING. WE WON'T WIN ON THE BASIS OF PHYSICAL STRENGTH.
HOWEVER, I HAVE OTHER SKILLS THAT MIGHT PROVE USEFUL. IT'LL BE WEDGE AND ME AGAINST THE IMPS.
NOW SEE HERE, WINTER...!

NO, YOU SEE HERE! ROGUE SQUADRON WAS ASSIGNED TO ASSIST ME. I CALL THE SHOTS!
NOW LET'S GET THIS CONTEST GOING BEFORE CAZNE'OLAN CHANGES HIS MIND ABOUT SELLING OUT FIRITH!
I MUST OFFICIALLY PROTEST THE USE OF A FEMALE COMBATANT, BUT IF SUCH IS YOUR WISH....
IT IS. WHAT ARE THESE HEADBANDS FOR?
THE CONTEST WILL BE HELD IN A MOST HAZARDOUS LOCATION. THESE DEVICES MONITOR ALL THAT YOU SEE AND HEAR FOR THE JUDGE, WHO WILL REMAIN SAFELY IN KALA'LUN.
AND THE JUDGE WOULD BE...?
I HAVE BEEN GIVEN THAT HONOR.
NOW IF YOU WILL PLEASE REFRAIN FROM SPEECH WHILE WE CALIBRATE YOUR MONITORS, THE CONTEST WILL SOON BE UNDERWAY


THE CONTEST IS NOT FAIR.


YOU HAVE NO CHANCE AGAINST US. THERE WILL BE NO HONOR IN DEFEATING YOU.
REALLY? I THINK YOU'RE JUST AFRAID OF LOSING TO A WOMAN.

DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH.


THERE IS YOUR GOAL--THE GLOBE OF VICTORY. WHOEVER REACHES THE GLOBE FIRST IS THE WINNER.

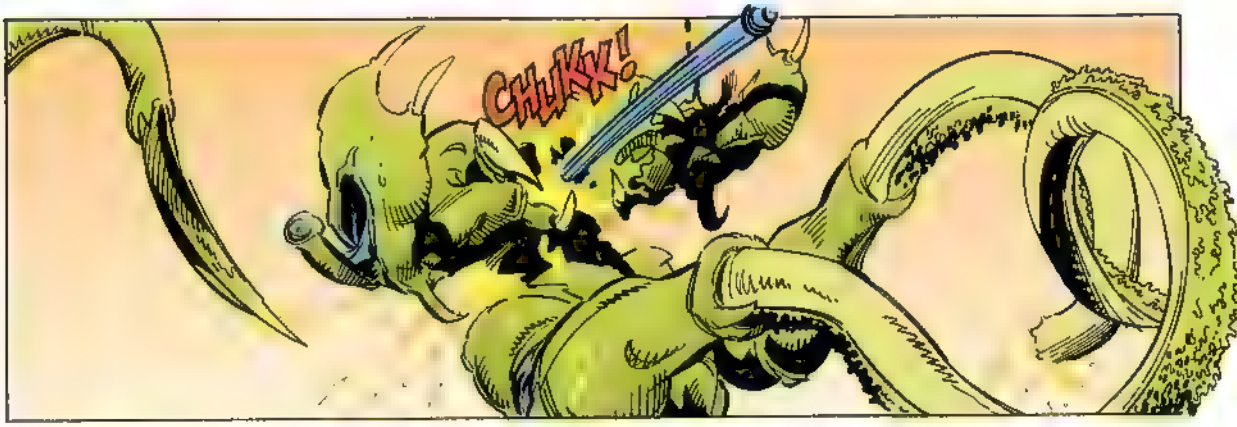
YOU HAVE EACH BEEN GIVEN THE TRADITIONAL LYAER'TSA, YOUR ONLY ALLOWED WEAPON. YOU MAY USE IT TO INFLICT ANY NON-LETHAL INJURY ON YOUR OPPONENTS.
THESE ARE THE ONLY RULES. LET THE CONTEST BEGIN!
OOF!
WHUF!
ADVANTAGE... THE IMPERIAL TROOPERS.

COME ON!
CAN'T.. BREATHE!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BREATHE-- JUST RUN!
YAAARRGGHHH!
AAHHHHGGHH!

NOW'S OUR CHANCE! HURRY!
UUUH!
WEDGE! FORGET ABOUT ME!
"THE IMP TROOPER'S ABOUT TO GRAB THE PRIZE! YOU CAN STILL BEAT HIM TO IT!"

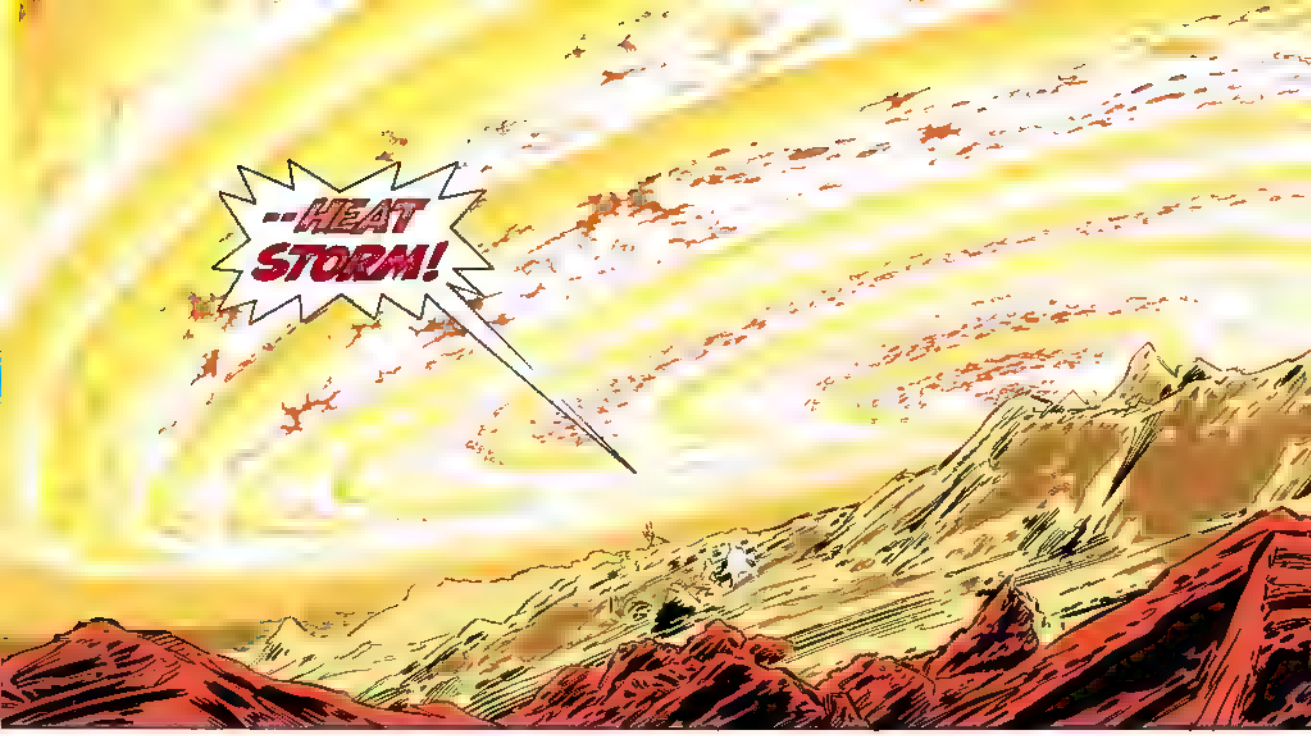
THERE'S NO WAY I'M LEAVING IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS FIGHT!
I'M ORDERING YOU OUT, WEDGE!

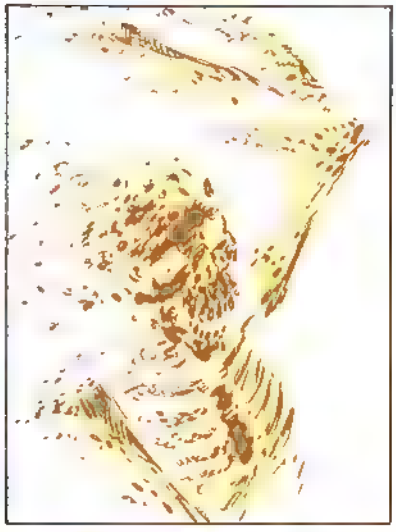
SORRY, WINTER, BUT I DIDN'T HEAR THAT ORDER! I'M IN ON THIS ONE TO THE END!


CHUKK!

FWUMP

KA-CHUNCH!
WELL, YOU BLEW IT.
VICTORY! VICTORY!
SORRY, WINTER. SAVING YOUR LIFE COST US THE MISSION.
AND GAINED VERY LITTLE...OR HAVEN'T YOU NOTICED THE SUDDEN INCREASE IN AMBIENT TEMPERATURE?
ON RYLOTH, THAT CAN MEAN ONLY ONE THING--

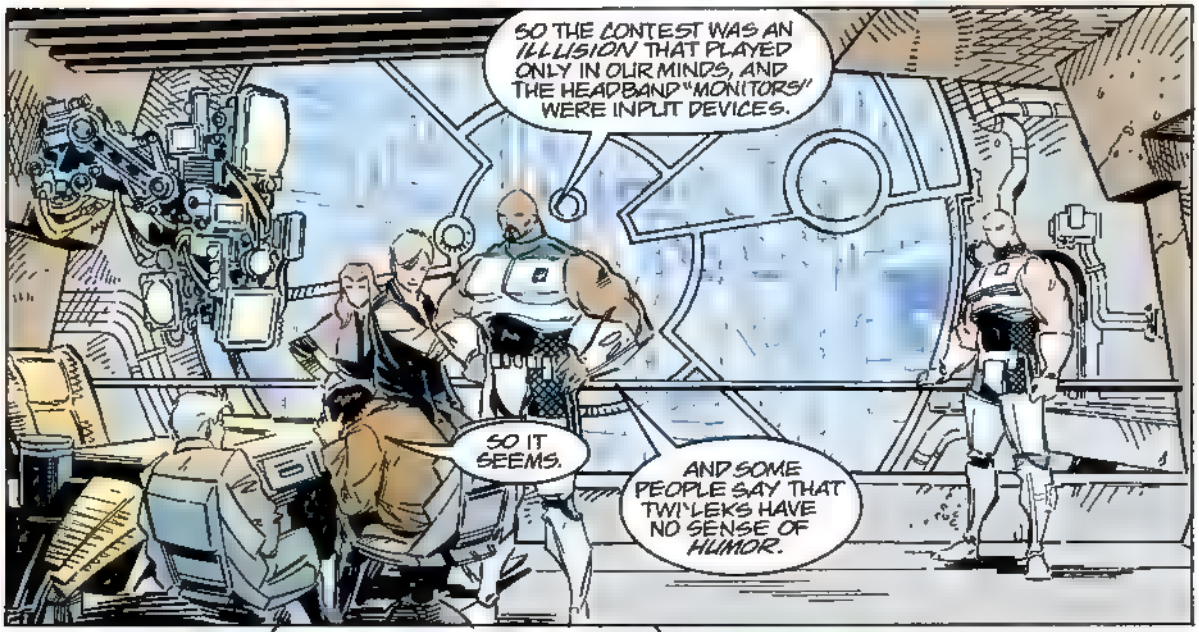

--HEAT
STORM!



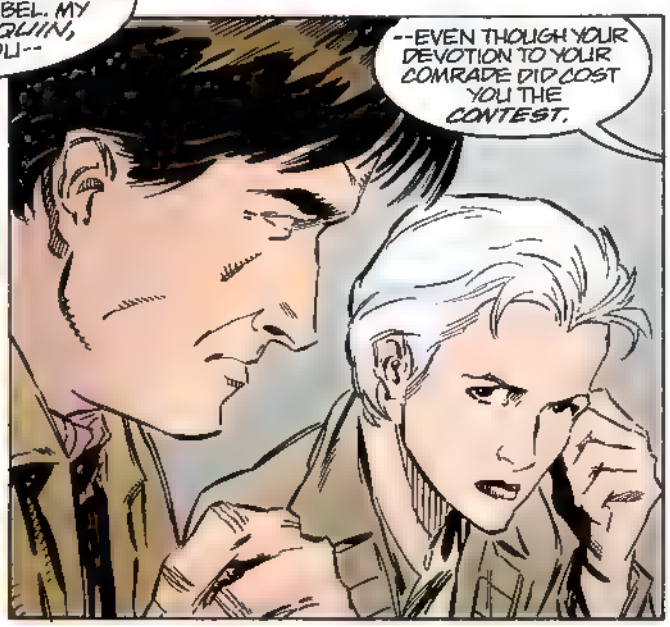
THE CONTEST IS OVER.
WHEN THEY HAVE RECOVERED, HAVE THEM REPORT TO ME.
YOU DO SEE THAT I HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE, DON'T YOU, FORTUNA?
TRADING YOU FOR MY FREEDOM IS THE ONLY COURSE OF ACTION I HAVE LEFT.
AND AFTER ALL, IT'S YOUR OWN ACTIONS THAT'VE MADE YOU THE MOST WANTED MAN ON RYLOTH.
SO, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, JUSTICE WILL BE SERVED.

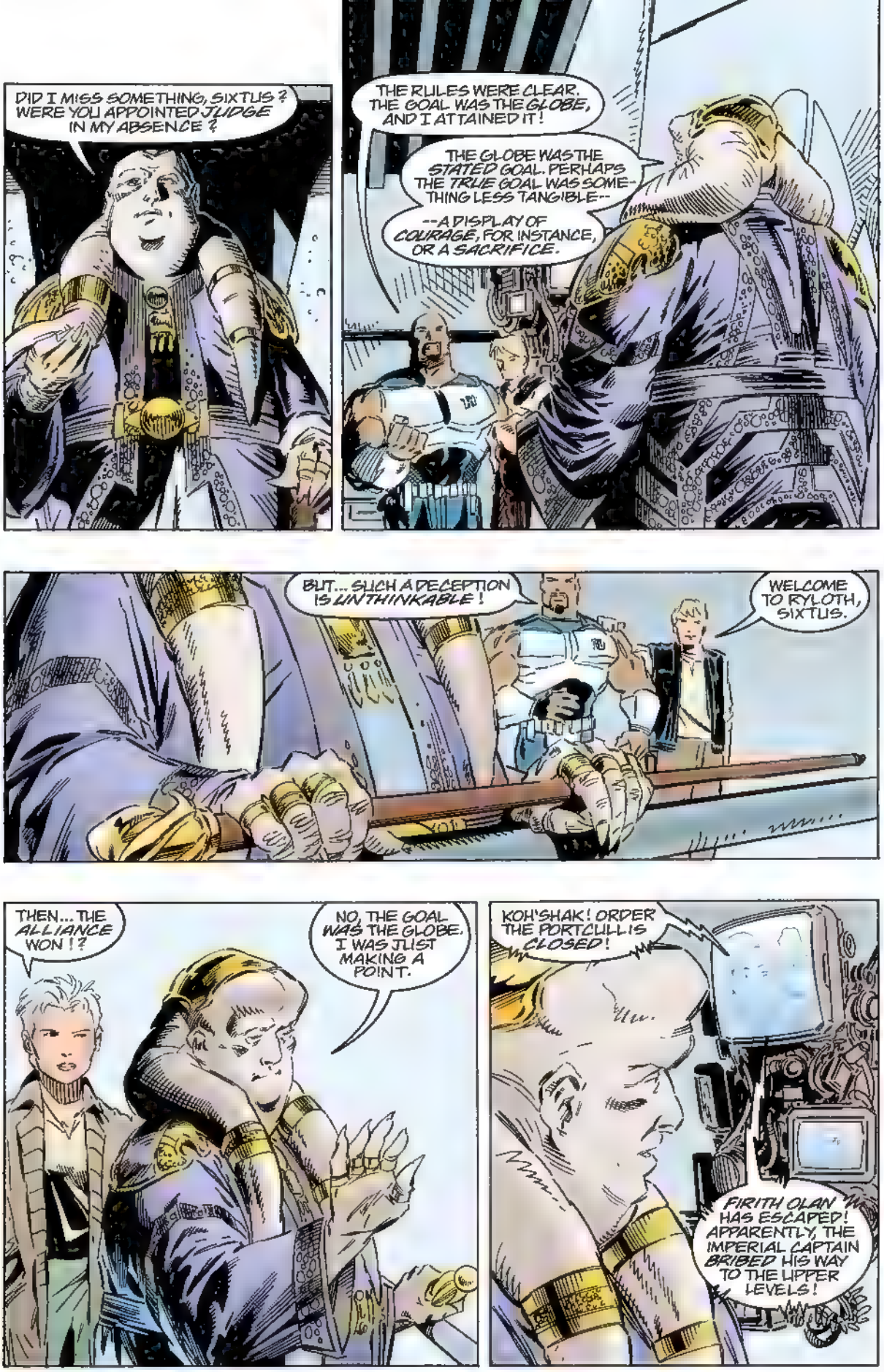
PERHAPS SUCH DRASTIC MEASURES DO NOT NEED TO BE TAKEN, FIRITH OLAN.
WHAT...?!

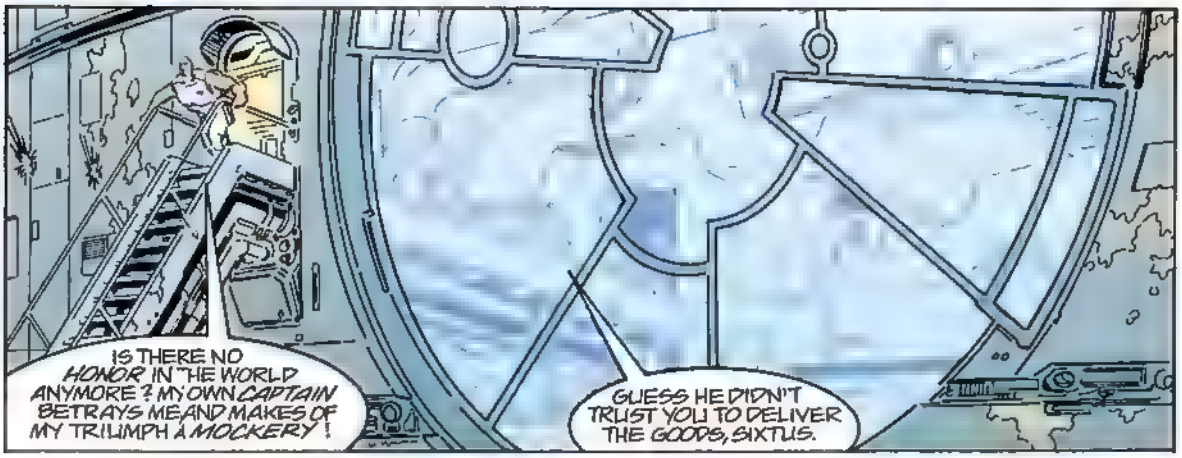
I SUGGEST THAT YOU LISTEN VERY CAREFULLY TO THE OFFER I AM ABOUT TO MAKE. YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT.


SO THE CONTEST WAS AN *ILLUSION* THAT PLAYED ONLY IN OUR MINDS, AND THE HEADBAND "MONITORS" WERE INPUT DEVICES.
SO IT SEEMS.
AND SOME PEOPLE SAY THAT TWI'LEKS HAVE NO SENSE OF *HUMOR*.

NONETHELESS, YOU CONDUCTED YOURSELF WELL, REBEL. MY NAME IS *SIXTUS QUIN*, AND I SALUTE YOU--

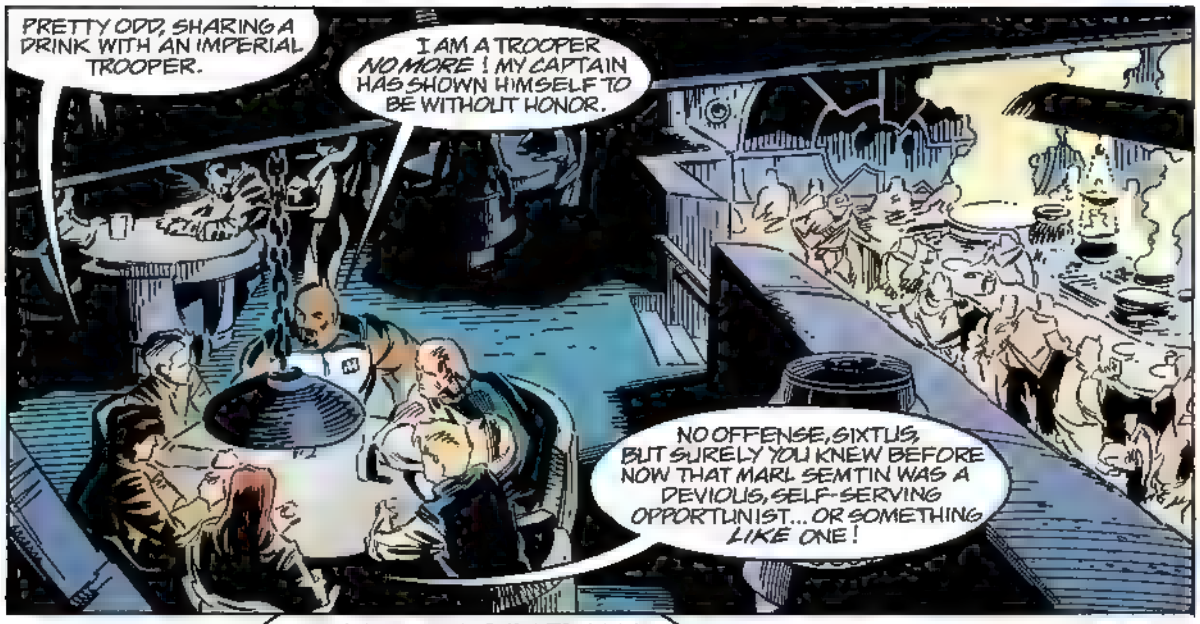

--EVEN THOUGH YOUR DEVOTION TO YOUR COMRADE DID COST YOU THE *CONTEST*.

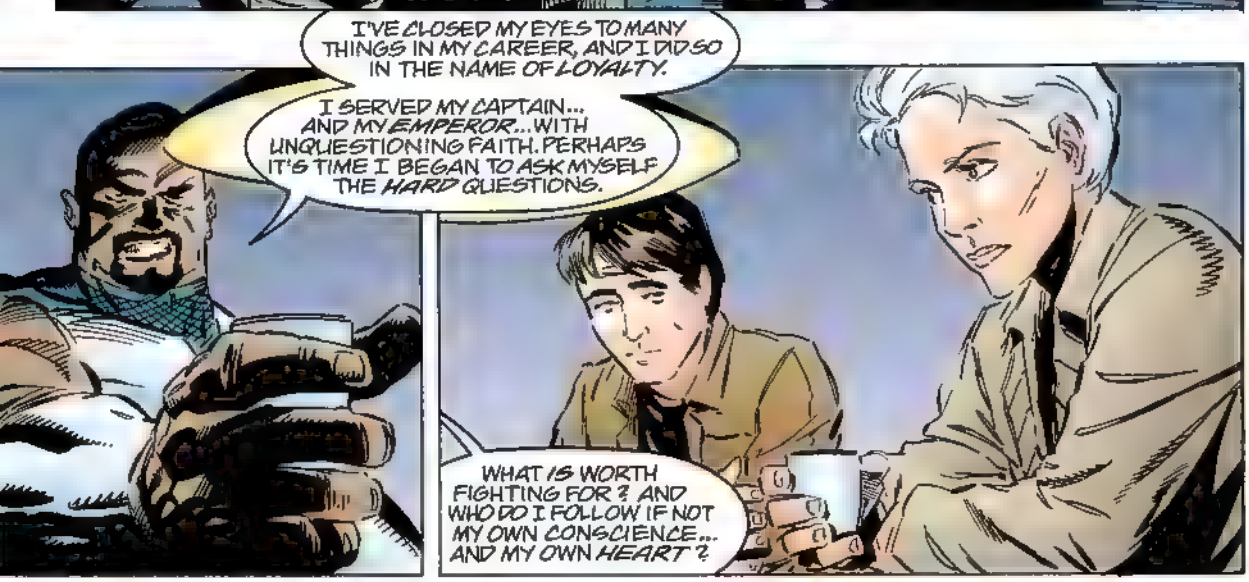

DID I MISS SOMETHING, SIXTUS? WERE YOU APPOINTED JUDGE IN MY ABSENCE?
THE RULES WERE CLEAR. THE GOAL WAS THE GLOBE, AND I ATTAINED IT!
THE GLOBE WAS THE STATED GOAL. PERHAPS THE TRUE GOAL WAS SOMETHING LESS TANGIBLE--
--A DISPLAY OF COURAGE, FOR INSTANCE, OR A SACRIFICE.
BUT... SUCH A DECEPTION IS UNTHINKABLE!
WELCOME TO RYLOTH, SIXTUS.
THEN... THE ALLIANCE WON!?
NO, THE GOAL WAS THE GLOBE. I WAS JUST MAKING A POINT.
KOH'SHAK! ORDER THE PORTCULLIS CLOSED!
FIRITH OLAN HAS ESCAPED! APPARENTLY, THE IMPERIAL CAPTAIN BRIBED HIS WAY TO THE UPPER LEVELS!

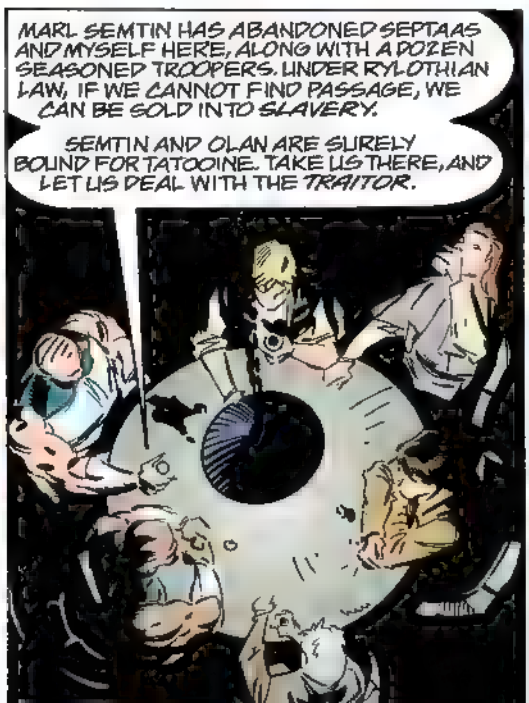

IS THERE NO HONOR IN THE WORLD ANYMORE? MY OWN CAPTAIN BETRAYS ME AND MAKES OF MY TRIUMPH A MOCKERY!
GUESS HE DIDN'T TRUST YOU TO DELIVER THE GOODS, SIXTUS.

THERE THEY GO!
YOU LEFT THE PORTCULL IS WIDE OPEN! WHAT HAPPENED TO THE NOTORIOUS RYLOTHIAN CONCERN FOR SECURITY?
SAVE YOUR BREATH, WEDGE. THE STARPORT MASTER IS MORE INTERESTED IN HIS NEW TUNIC--

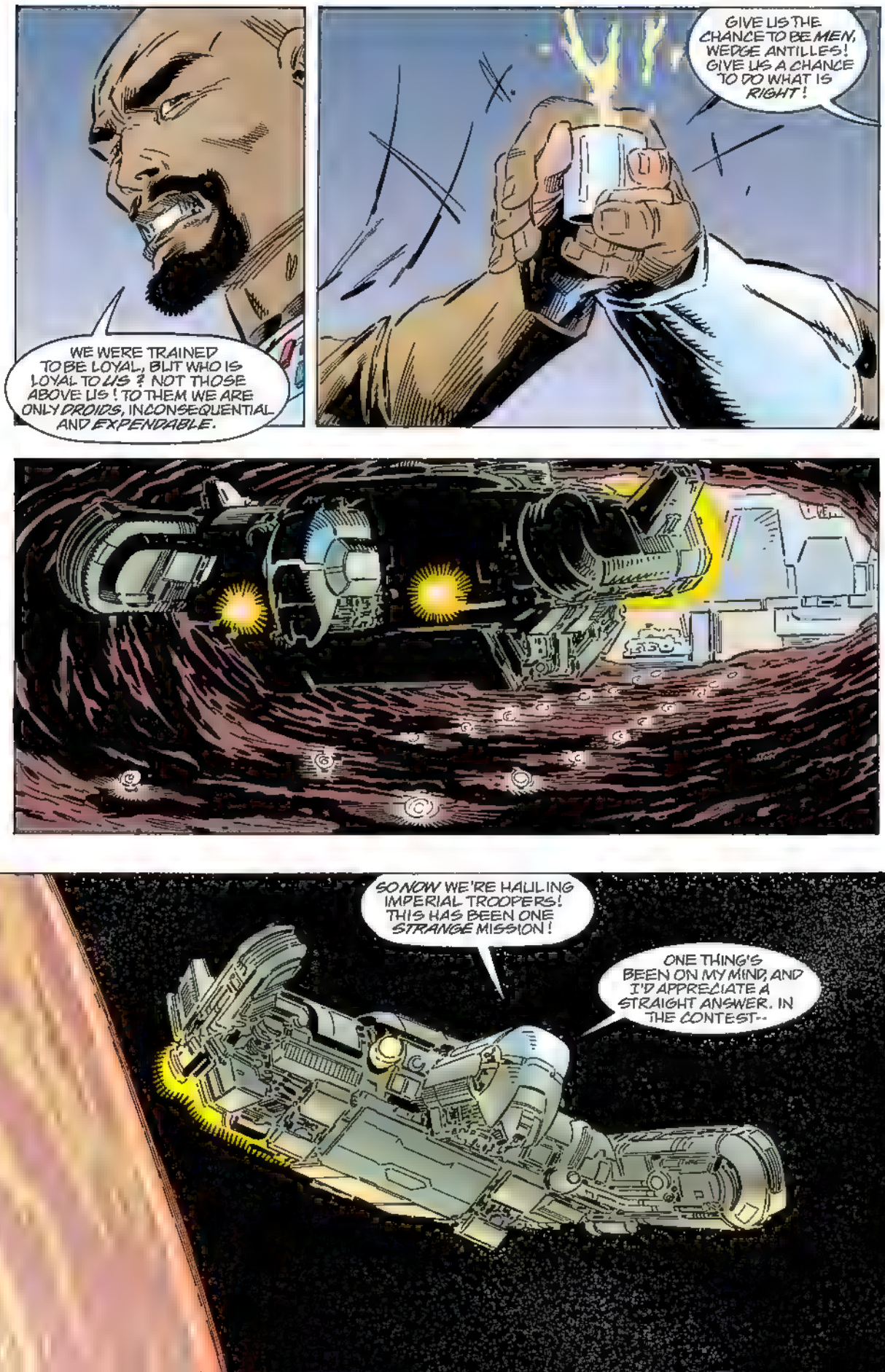
--WHICH YOU WILL NOTICE, IS MADE OF KOOLACH SILK. SEMTIN GOT TO HIM BETTER THAN WE DID.
CLEAR US FOR IMMEDIATE TAKEOFF, OR SO HELP ME, I'LL...!
FORGET IT, TYCHO. OUR SHIP'S HEMMED IN.
I'M SURE KOH'SHAK WILL CLEAR US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
GLADLY. THE SOONER TO BE RID OF YOU.

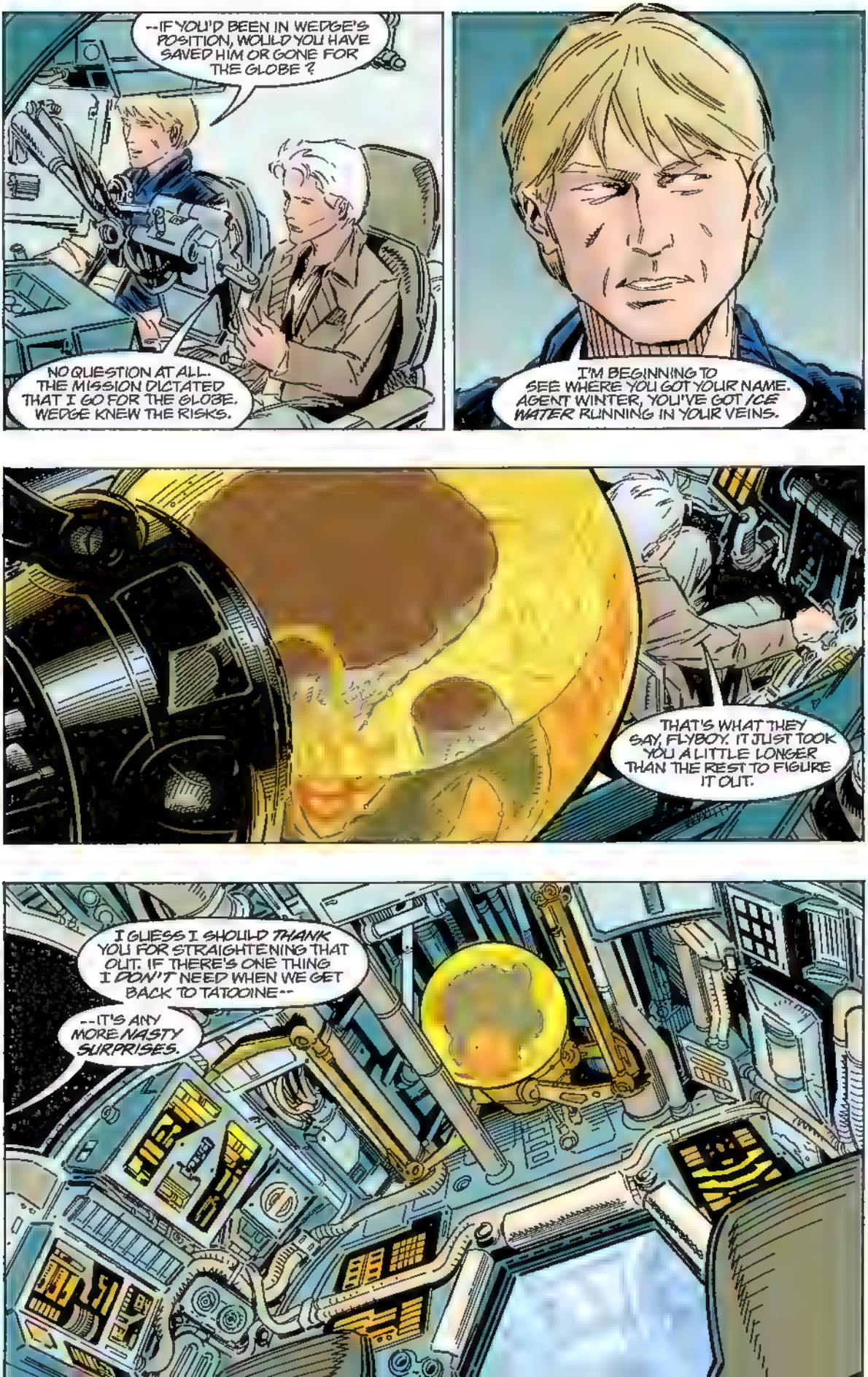

PRETTY ODD, SHARING A DRINK WITH AN IMPERIAL TROOPER.
I AM A TROOPER NO MORE! MY CAPTAIN HAS SHOWN HIMSELF TO BE WITHOUT HONOR.
NO OFFENSE, SIXTUS, BUT SURELY YOU KNEW BEFORE NOW THAT MARL SEMTIN WAS A DEVIOUS, SELF-SERVING OPPORTUNIST... OR SOMETHING LIKE ONE!

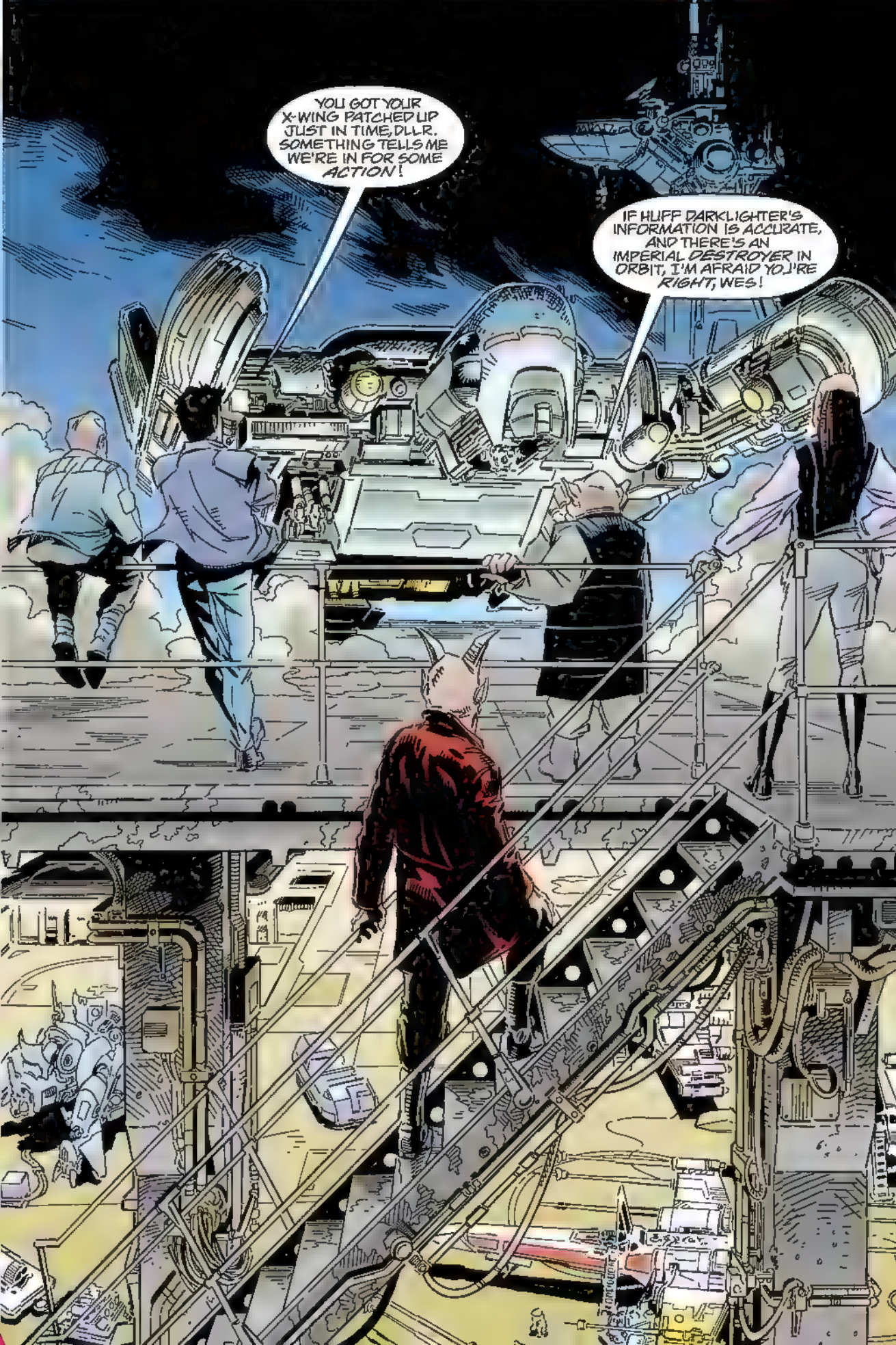

I'VE CLOSED MY EYES TO MANY THINGS IN MY CAREER, AND I DID SO IN THE NAME OF LOYALTY.
I SERVED MY CAPTAIN... AND MY EMPEROR... WITH UNQUESTIONING FAITH. PERHAPS IT'S TIME I BEGAN TO ASK MYSELF THE HARD QUESTIONS.
WHAT IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR? AND WHO DO I FOLLOW IF NOT MY OWN CONSCIENCE... AND MY OWN HEART?


MARL SEMTIN HAS ABANDONED SEPTAAS AND MYSELF HERE, ALONG WITH A DOZEN SEASONED TROOPERS. UNDER RYLOTHIAN LAW, IF WE CANNOT FIND PASSAGE, WE CAN BE SOLD INTO SLAVERY.
SEMTIN AND OLAN ARE SURELY BOUND FOR TATOOINE. TAKE US THERE, AND LET US DEAL WITH THE TRAITOR.

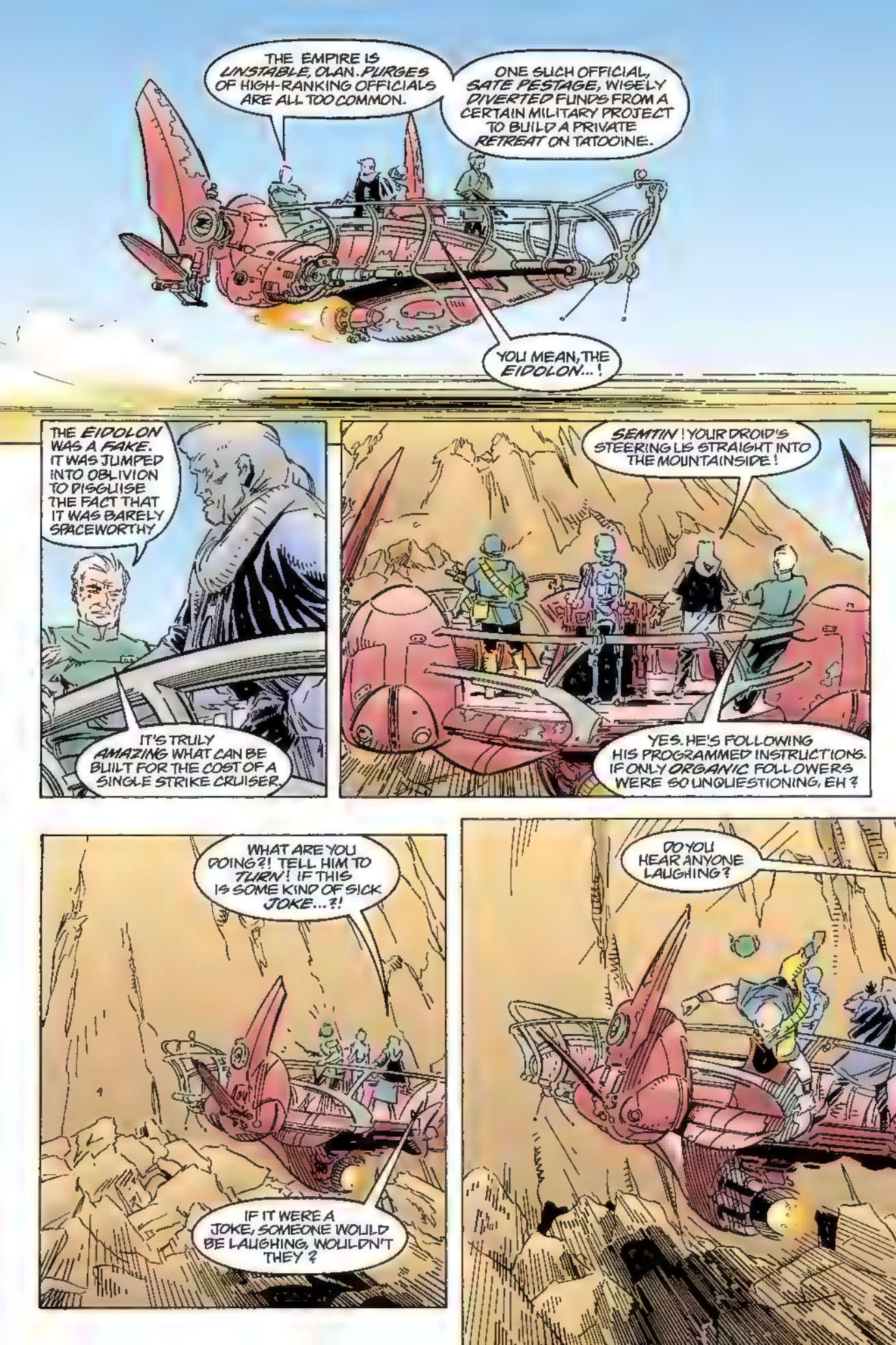
YOU THINK I SHOULD HELP YOU AND YOUR TROOPERS CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR THE EMPIRE?
NO! NOT FOR THE EMPIRE, BUT FOR HONOR!


WE WERE TRAINED TO BE LOYAL, BUT WHO IS LOYAL TO *US*? NOT THOSE ABOVE US! TO THEM WE ARE ONLY *DROIDS*, INCONSEQUENTIAL AND *EXPENDABLE*.
GIVE US THE CHANCE TO BE *MEN*, WEDGE ANTILLES! GIVE US A CHANCE TO DO WHAT IS *RIGHT*!
SO *NOW* WE'RE HAULING IMPERIAL TROOPERS! THIS HAS BEEN ONE *STRANGE* MISSION!
ONE THING'S BEEN ON MY MIND, AND I'D APPRECIATE A STRAIGHT ANSWER. IN THE CONTEST--


--IF YOU'D BEEN IN WEDGE'S POSITION, WOULD YOU HAVE SAVED HIM OR GONE FOR THE GLOBE ?
NO QUESTION AT ALL. THE MISSION DICTATED THAT I GO FOR THE GLOBE. WEDGE KNEW THE RISKS.
I'M BEGINNING TO SEE WHERE YOU GOT YOUR NAME. AGENT WINTER, YOU'VE GOT ICE WATER RUNNING IN YOUR VEINS.
THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY, FLYBOY. IT JUST TOOK YOU A LITTLE LONGER THAN THE REST TO FIGURE IT OUT.
I GUESS I SHOULD THANK YOU FOR STRAIGHTENING THAT OUT. IF THERE'S ONE THING I DON'T NEED WHEN WE GET BACK TO TATOOINE--
--IT'S ANY MORE NASTY SURPRISES.

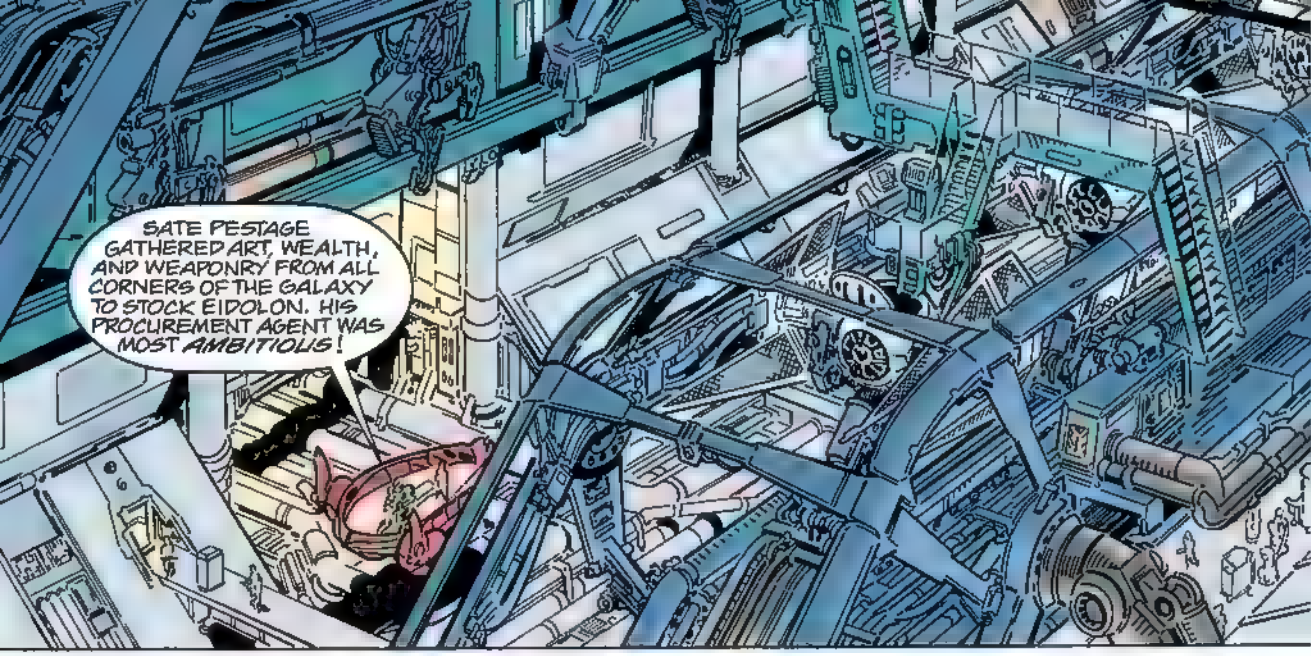

YOU GOT YOUR X-WING PATCHED UP JUST IN TIME, D'LLR. SOMETHING TELLS ME WE'RE IN FOR SOME ACTION!
IF HUFF DARKLIGHTER'S INFORMATION IS ACCURATE, AND THERE'S AN IMPERIAL DESTROYER IN ORBIT, I'M AFRAID YOU'RE RIGHT, WES!

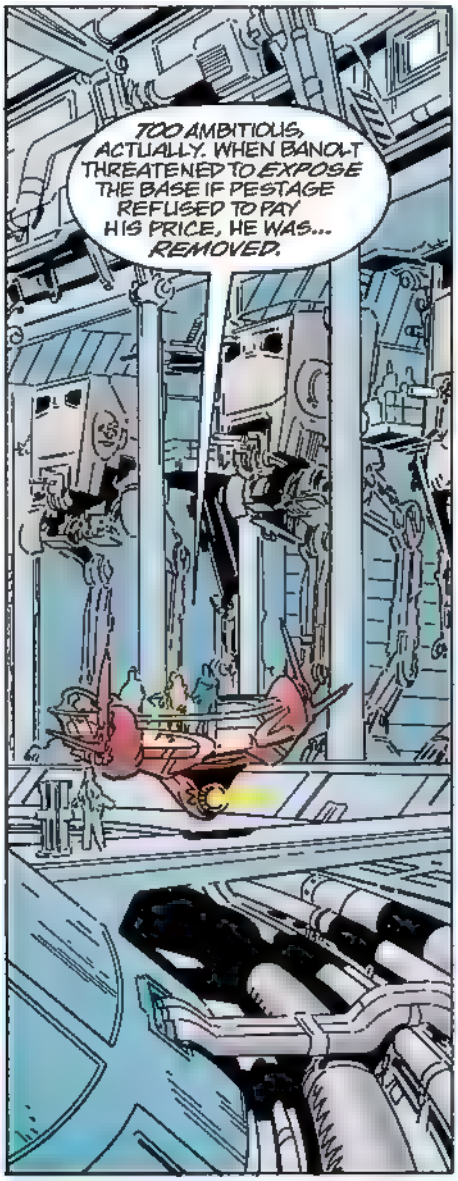
PERSONALLY, I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SHOOTING DOWN A FEW IMPS!
YOU SAID IT, PLOURR! I DIDN'T COME TO TATOOINE JUST TO RIDE HERD ON THE LOCAL WARLORDS!
WHAT IN THE--!?
IMPERIAL SPECIAL FORCES TROOPERS!
WE'VE BEEN HAD!
WAIT! IF THEY WANTED TO KILL US, THEY'D HAVE COME OUT BLASTING!
WINTER TOLD US TO BE PREPARED FOR A SHOCK! THIS MUST BE IT!
SHE ALSO PROMISED US AN EXPLANATION.
AND YOU'LL GET IT... WHILE WE TRAVEL. TIME IS SHORT, AND WE HAVE A LOT TO DO!

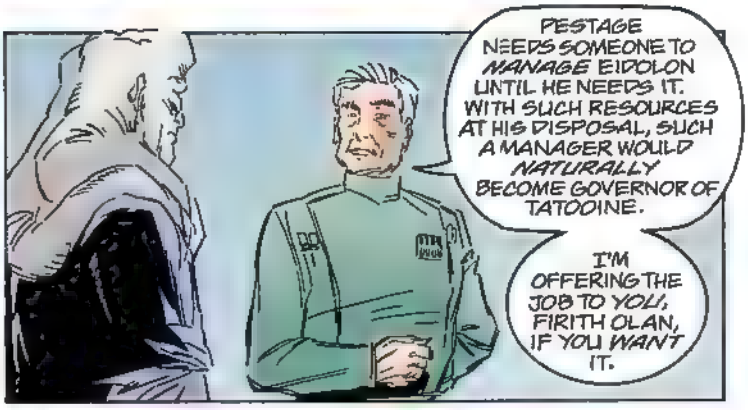

THE EMPIRE IS UNSTABLE, OLAN. PURGES OF HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS ARE ALL TOO COMMON.
ONE SUCH OFFICIAL, SATE PESTAGE, WISELY DIVERTED FUNDS FROM A CERTAIN MILITARY PROJECT TO BUILD A PRIVATE RETREAT ON TATOOINE.
YOU MEAN, THE EIDOLON...!
THE EIDOLON WAS A FAKE. IT WAS JUMPED INTO OBLIVION TO DISGUISE THE FACT THAT IT WAS BARELY SPACEWORTHY
IT'S TRULY AMAZING WHAT CAN BE BUILT FOR THE COST OF A SINGLE STRIKE CRUISER.
SEMTIN! YOUR DROID'S STEERING IS STRAIGHT INTO THE MOUNTAINSIDE!
YES. HE'S FOLLOWING HIS PROGRAMMED INSTRUCTIONS. IF ONLY ORGANIC FOLLOWERS WERE SO UNQUESTIONING, EH?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! TELL HIM TO TURN! IF THIS IS SOME KIND OF SICK JOKE...?!
IF IT WERE A JOKE, SOMEONE WOULD BE LAUGHING, WOULDN'T THEY?
DO YOU HEAR ANYONE LAUGHING?

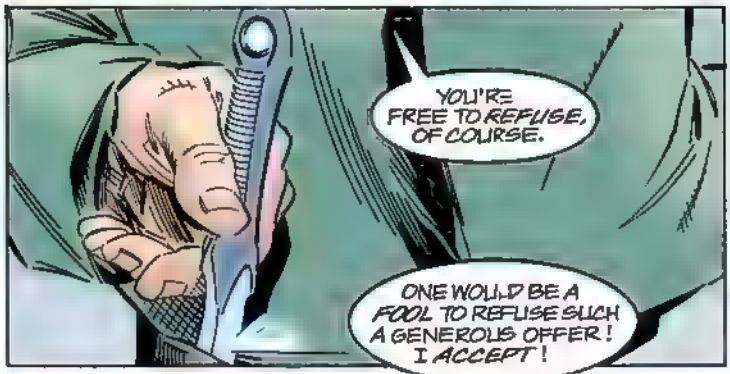
WELCOME, FIRITH, TO EIDOLON BASE!

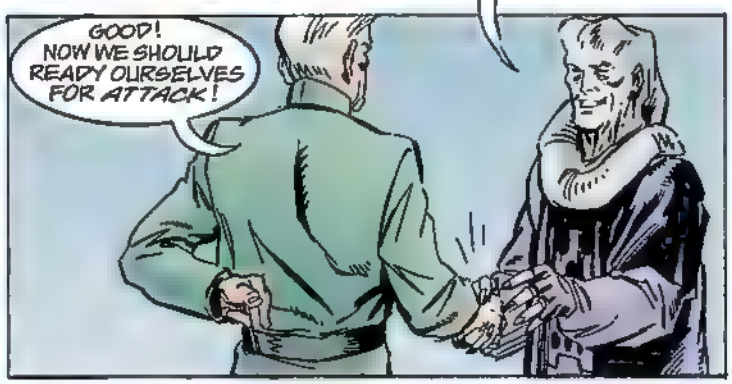
¡BM BM BM BM BM BM!

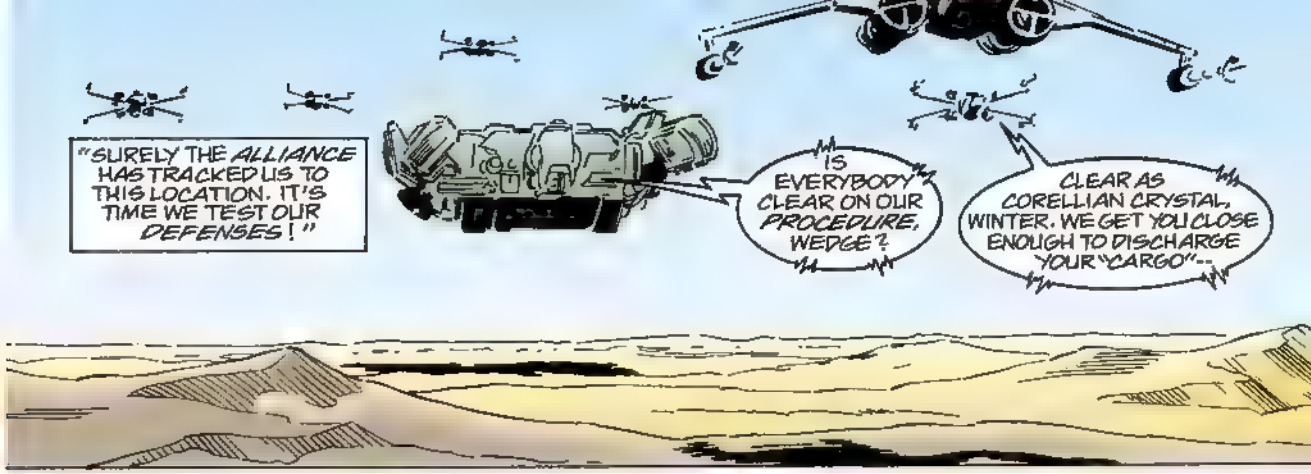

SATE PESTAGE GATHERED ART, WEALTH, AND WEAPONRY FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE GALAXY TO STOCK EIDOLON. HIS PROCUREMENT AGENT WAS MOST AMBITIOUS!

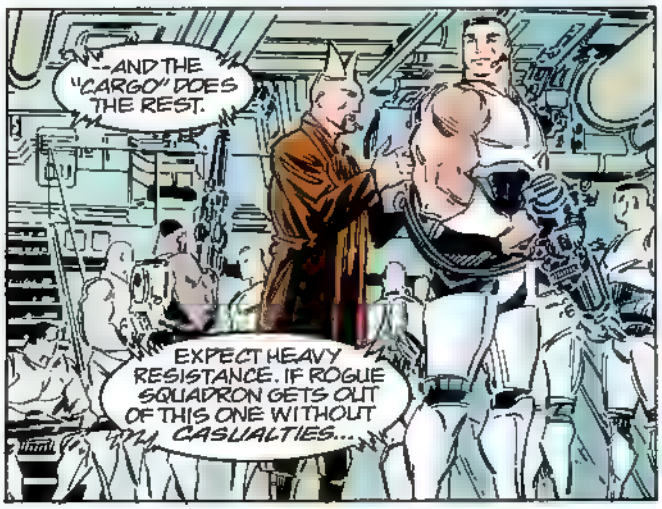

TOO AMBITIOUS, ACTUALLY. WHEN BANOLT THREATENED TO EXPOSE THE BASE IF PESTAGE REFUSED TO PAY HIS PRICE, HE WAS... REMOVED.


PESTAGE NEEDS SOMEONE TO MANAGE EIDOLON UNTIL HE NEEDS IT. WITH SUCH RESOURCES AT HIS DISPOSAL, SUCH A MANAGER WOULD NATURALLY BECOME GOVERNOR OF TATOOINE.
I'M OFFERING THE JOB TO YOU, FIRITH OLAN, IF YOU WANT IT.

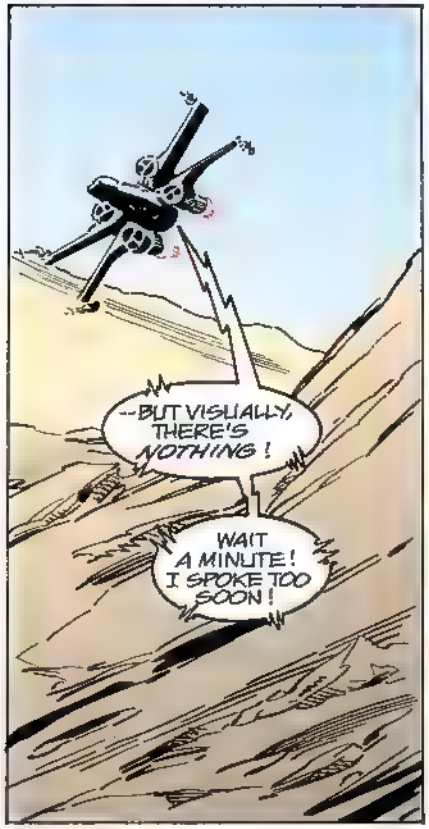

YOU'RE FREE TO REFUSE, OF COURSE.
ONE WOULD BE A FOOL TO REFUSE SUCH A GENEROUS OFFER! I ACCEPT!


GOOD! NOW WE SHOULD READY OURSELVES FOR ATTACK!

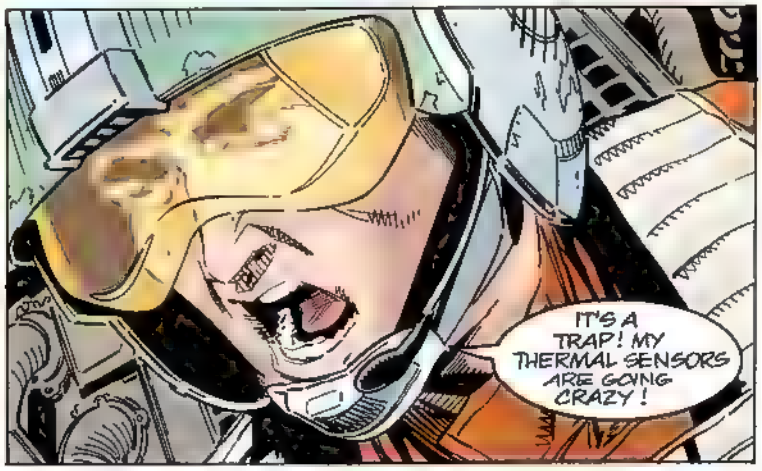

"SURELY THE ALLIANCE HAS TRACKED US TO THIS LOCATION. IT'S TIME WE TEST OUR DEFENSES!"
IS EVERYBODY CLEAR ON OUR PROCEDURE, WEDGE?
CLEAR AS CORELLIAN CRYSTAL, WINTER. WE GET YOU CLOSE ENOUGH TO DISCHARGE YOUR "CARGO"--

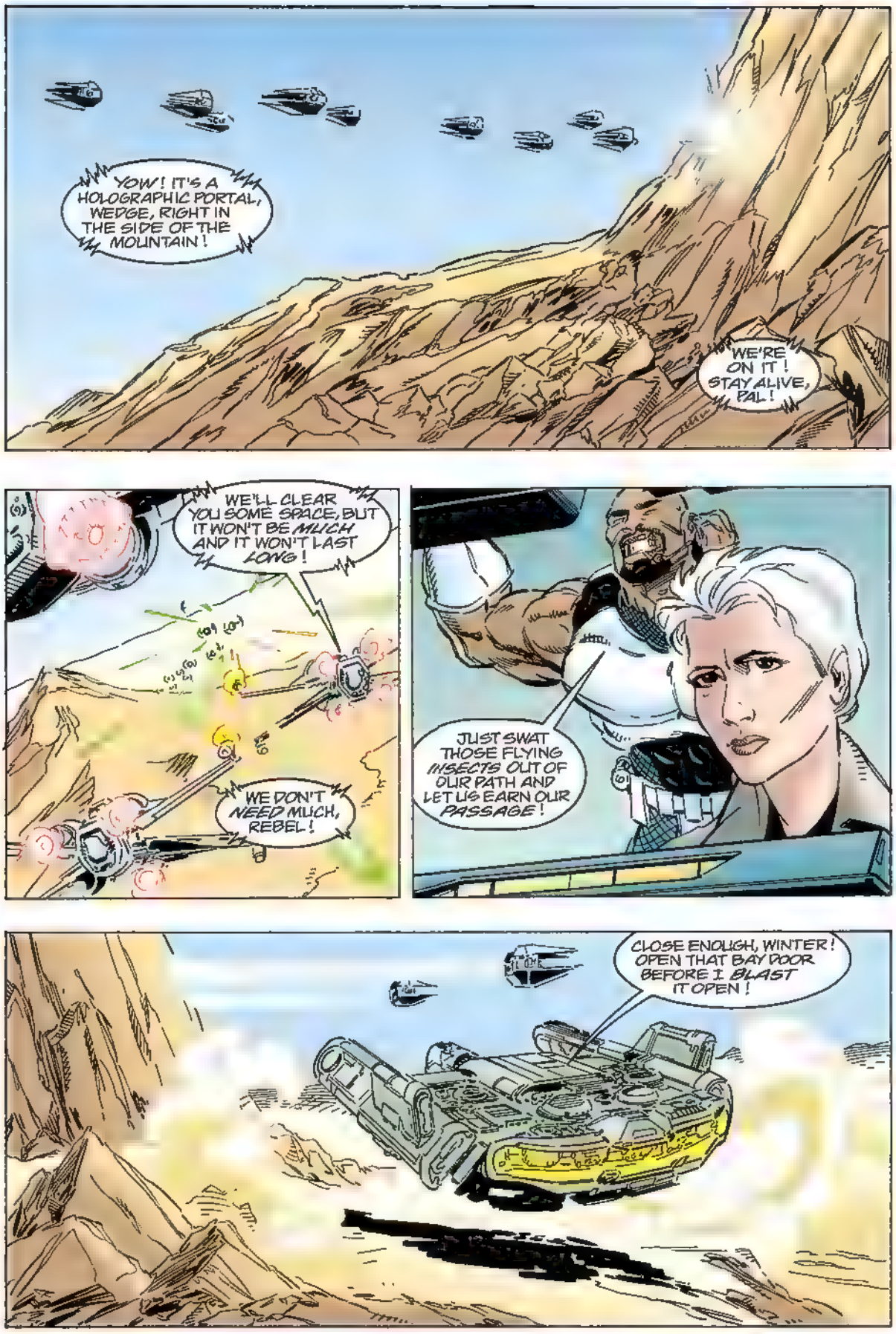

--AND THE "CARGO" DOES THE REST.
EXPECT HEAVY RESISTANCE. IF ROGUE SQUADRON GETS OUT OF THIS ONE WITHOUT CASUALTIES...

SAY NO MORE, WINTER. WE ALL KNOW THE RISK.
PROBLEM, WEDGE. INSTRUMENTS ARE PICKING UP PLENTY OF ACTIVITY--


--BUT VISUALLY, THERE'S NOTHING!
WAIT A MINUTE! I SPOKE TOO SOON!

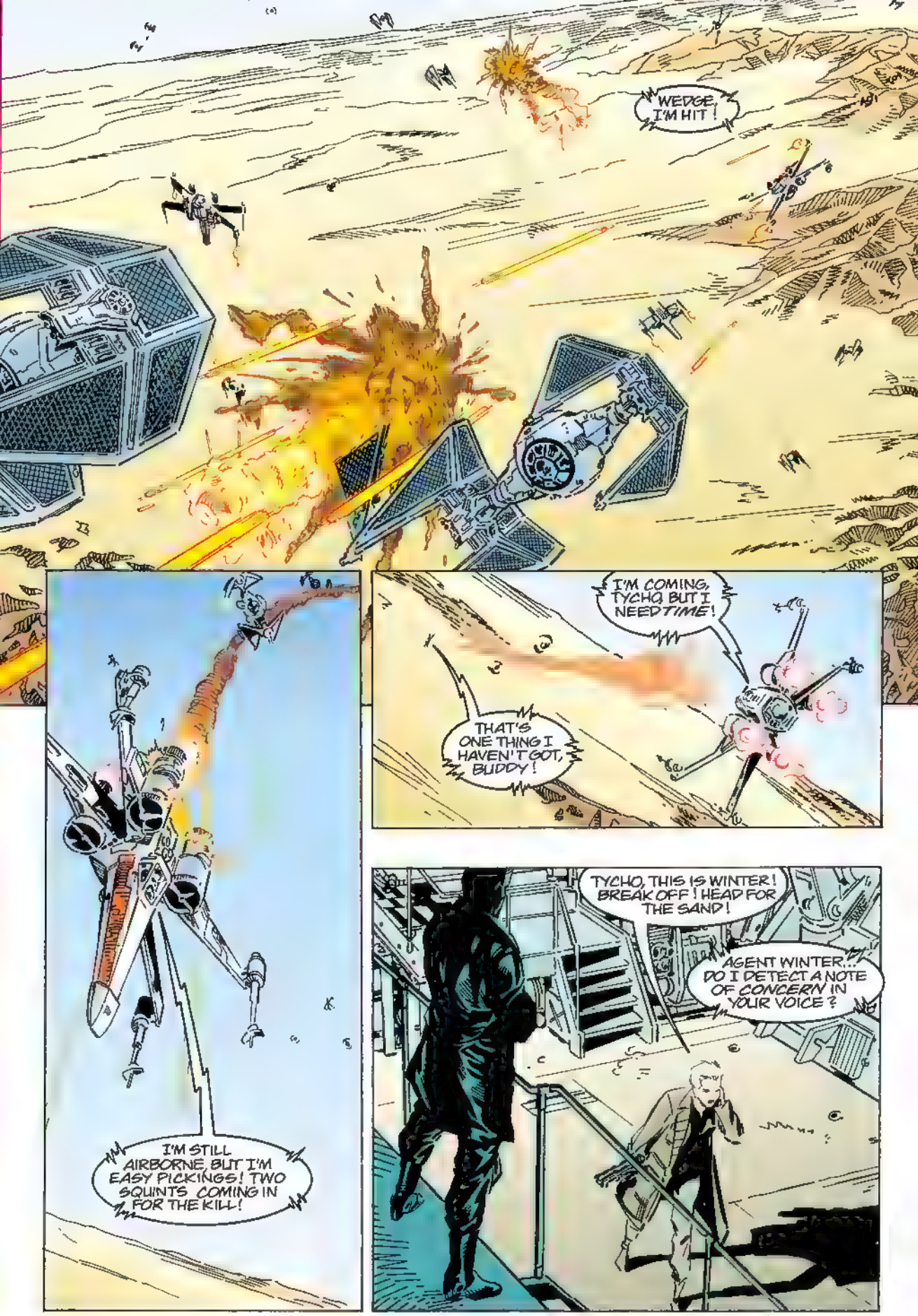
THERE'S A DEAD IMPAT THE BASE OF THE MOUNTAIN!
GET OUT OF THERE, TYCHO!

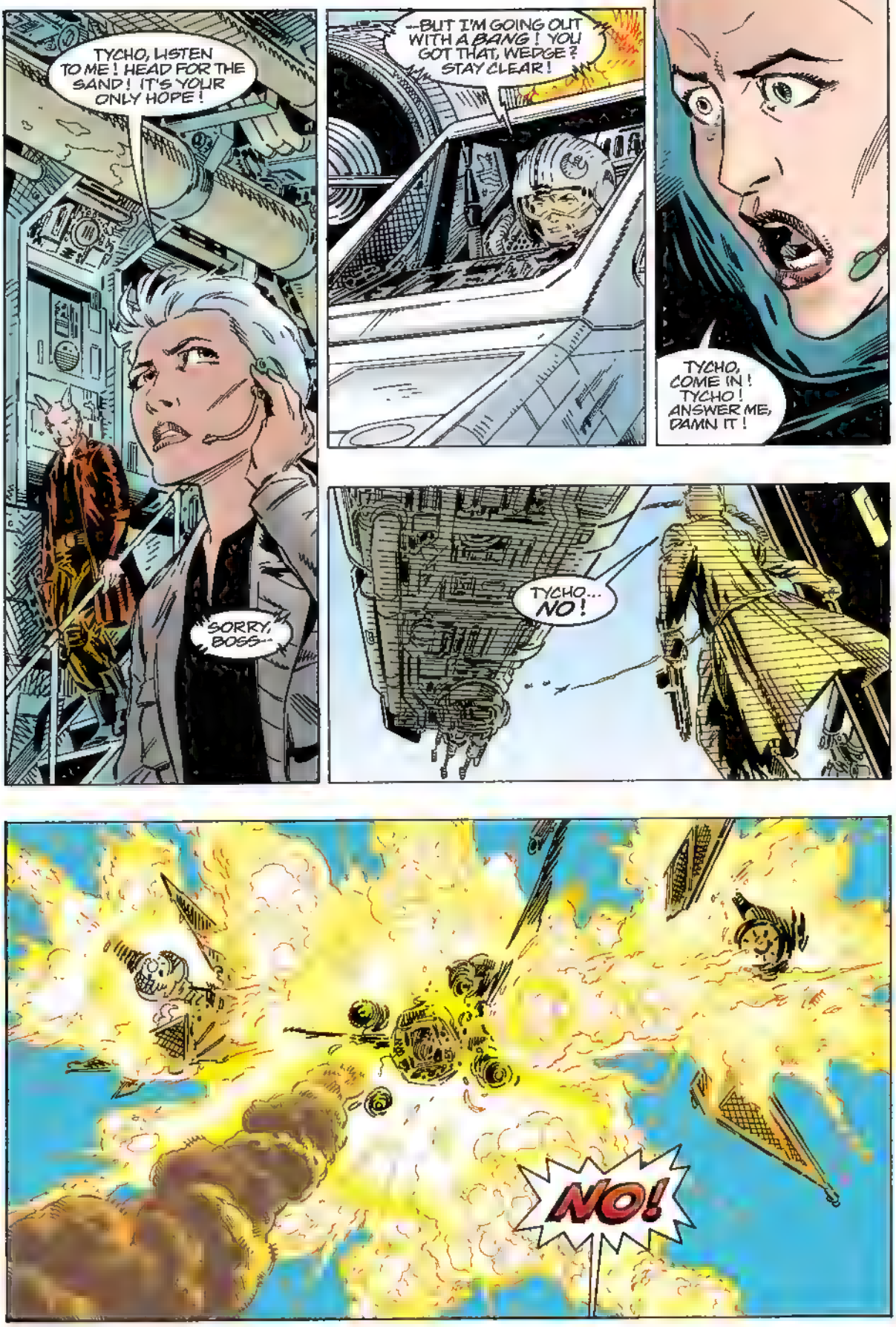

IT'S A TRAP! MY THERMAL SENSORS ARE GOING CRAZY!


YOW! IT'S A HOLOGRAPHIC PORTAL, WEDGE, RIGHT IN THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN!
WE'RE ON IT! STAY ALIVE, PAL!
WE'LL CLEAR YOU SOME SPACE, BUT IT WON'T BE MUCH AND IT WON'T LAST LONG!
WE DON'T NEED MUCH, REBEL!
JUST SWAT THOSE FLYING INSECTS OUT OF OUR PATH AND LET US EARN OUR PASSAGE!
CLOSE ENOUGH, WINTER! OPEN THAT BAY DOOR BEFORE I BLAST IT OPEN!

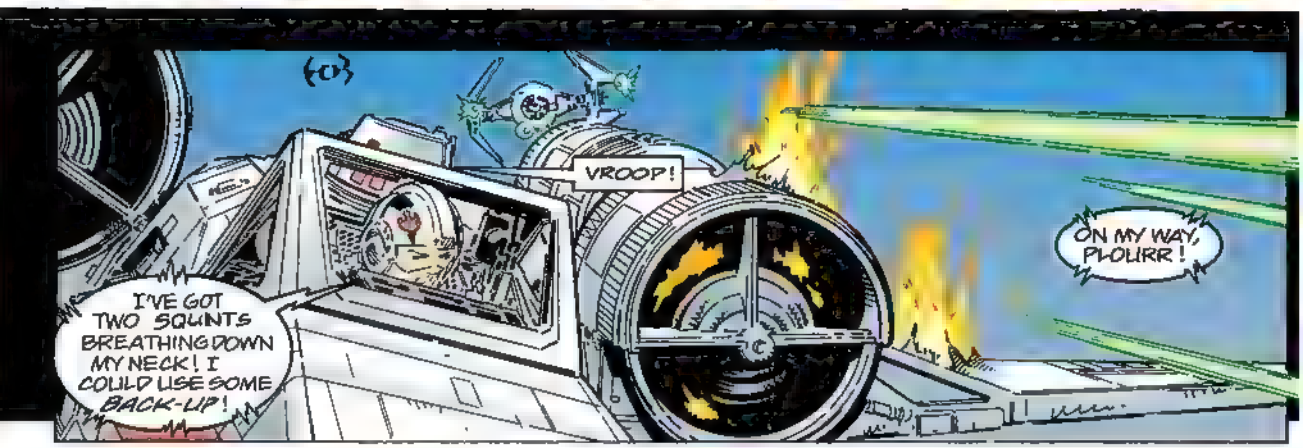
SEMMM-TIINNNN!
I DEPLOYED THE MEN FOR AN AERIAL ATTACK! YOU DIDN'T TELL ME I'D HAVE TO FIGHT OFF IMPERIAL TROOPERS!
DON'T THEY REALIZE THIS IS AN IMPERIAL BASE? CALL THEM OFF! HURRY...BEFORE THEY REACH US!
I KNEW YOU WERE A CROOK, FIRITH, BUT I DIDN'T TAKE YOU FOR A COWARD!
SADLY, YOU KNOW FAR TOO MUCH! WE CAN'T RISK YOUR CAPTURE BY THE ALLIANCE!
GAAAUGH!

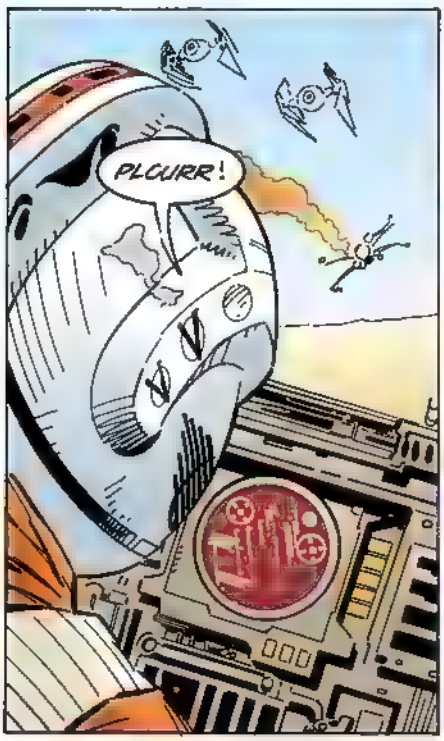
SEMTIN!
GO LUMP
YOU.

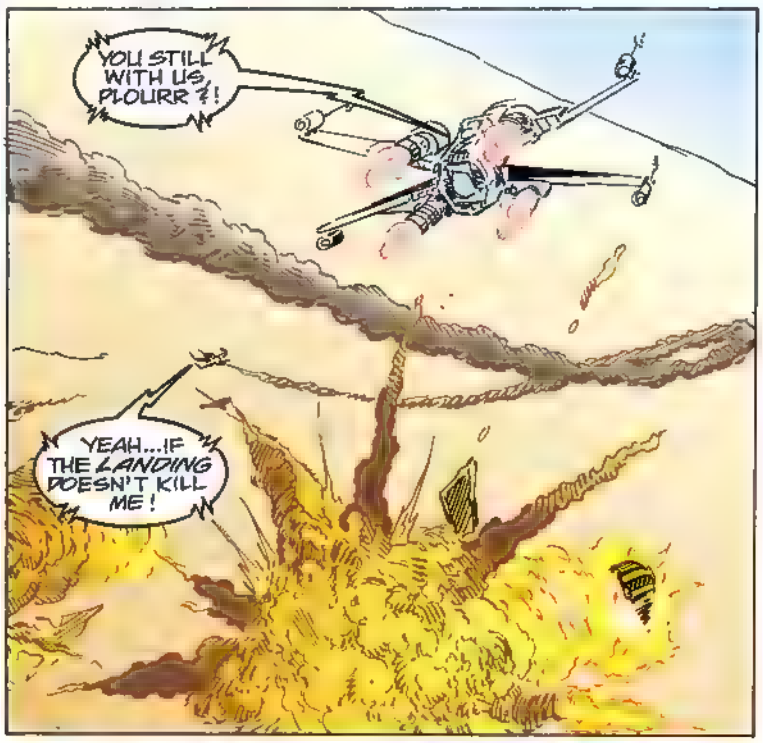

WEDGE, I'M HIT!
I'M COMING, TYCHO, BUT I NEED TIME!
THAT'S ONE THING I HAVEN'T GOT, BUDDY!
I'M STILL AIRBORNE, BUT I'M EASY PICKINGS! TWO SQUINTS COMING IN FOR THE KILL!
TYCHO, THIS IS WINTER! BREAK OFF! HEAD FOR THE SAND!
AGENT WINTER... DO I DETECT A NOTE OF CONCERN IN YOUR VOICE?


TYCHO, LISTEN TO ME! HEAD FOR THE SAND! IT'S YOUR ONLY HOPE!
SORRY, BOSS--
--BUT I'M GOING OUT WITH A BANG! YOU GOT THAT, WEDGE? STAY CLEAR!
TYCHO, COME IN! TYCHO! ANSWER ME, DAMN IT!
TYCHO... NO!
NO!

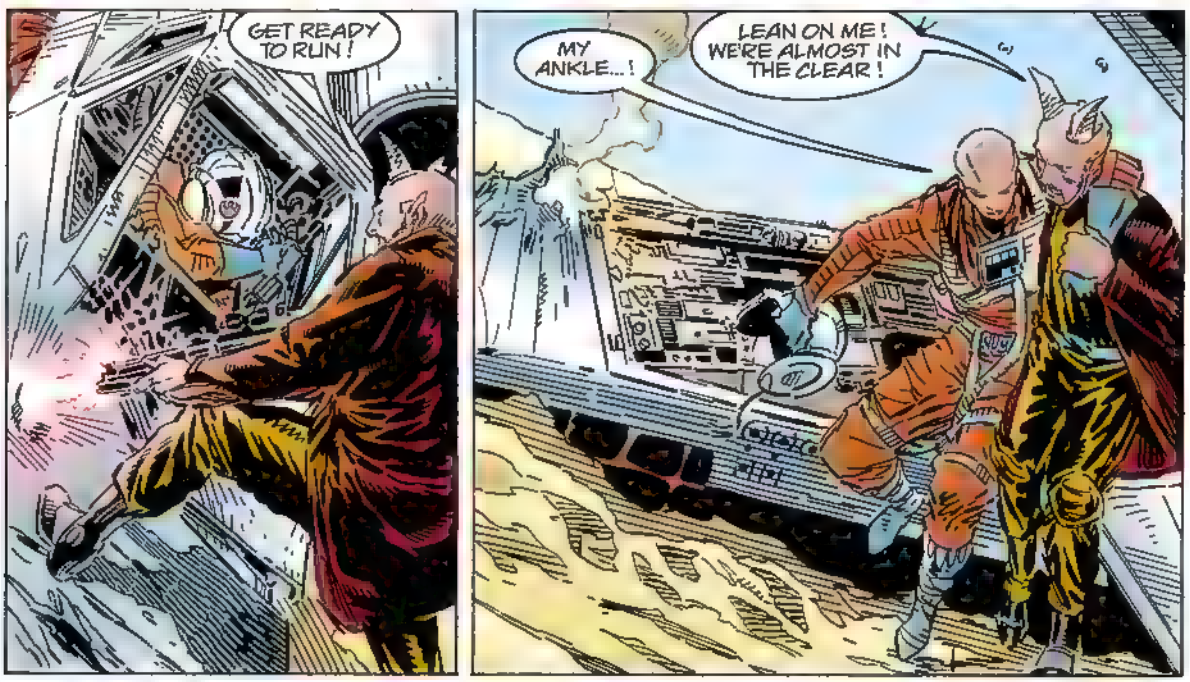
NO...
WEDGE, COME IN... THIS IS ELSCOL. I HAVE TO POINT OUT, CAPTAIN--
--THAT WE STILL HAVE AN IMPERIAL DESTROYER IN ORBIT. IT CAN RAIN A PLANETARY BOMBARDMENT ON THIS ENTIRE REGION!
SUGGEST THAT I TRY--
NEGATIVE, ELSCOL!
WE NEED EVERY X-WING WE'VE GOT! THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT THE DESTROYER!
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT.
THIS ISN'T HEROISM, ELSCOL... IT'S DESERTION!

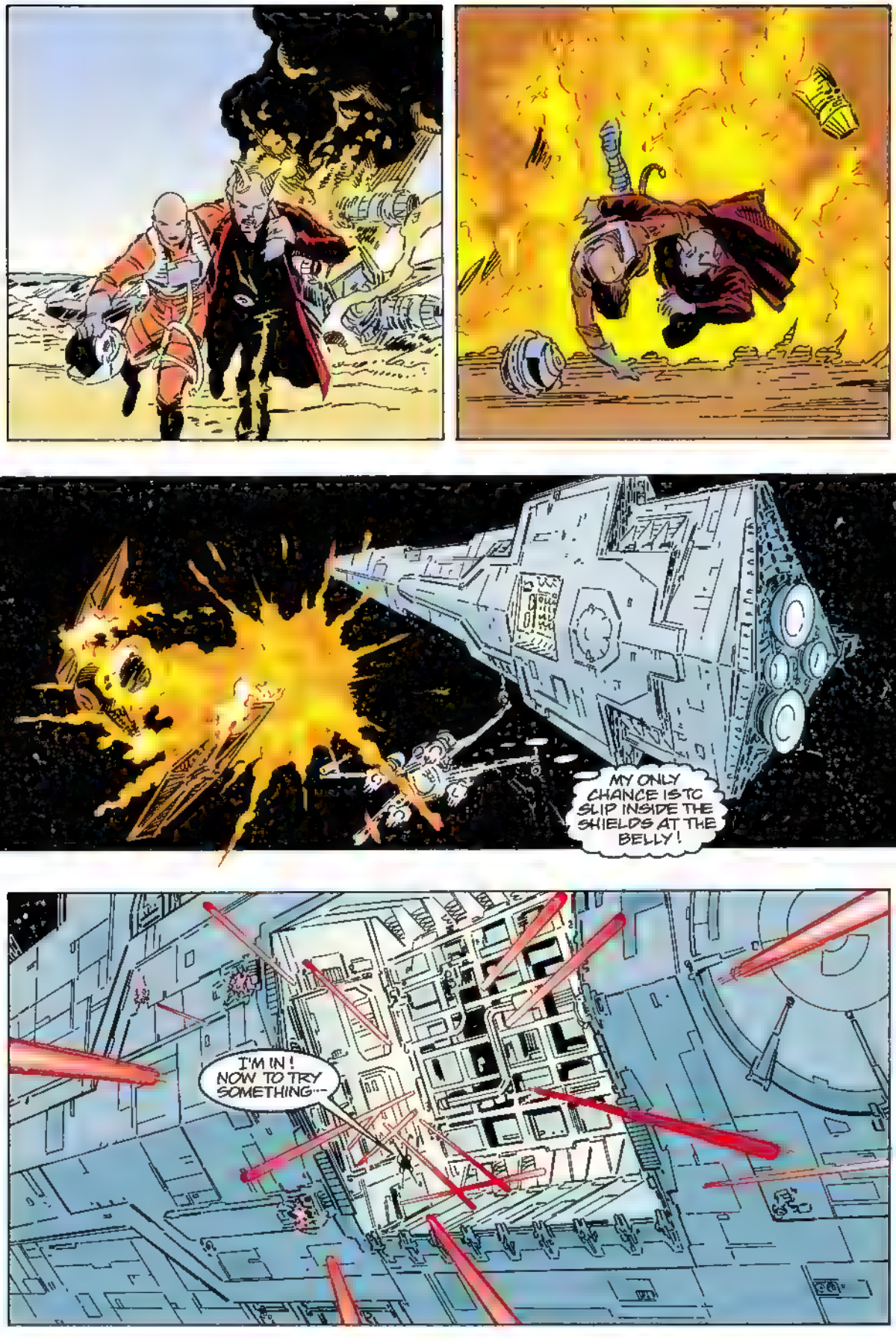

VROOP!
I'VE GOT TWO SQUINTS BREATHING DOWN MY NECK! I COULD USE SOME BACK-UP!
ON MY WAY, PLOURR!


PLOURR!

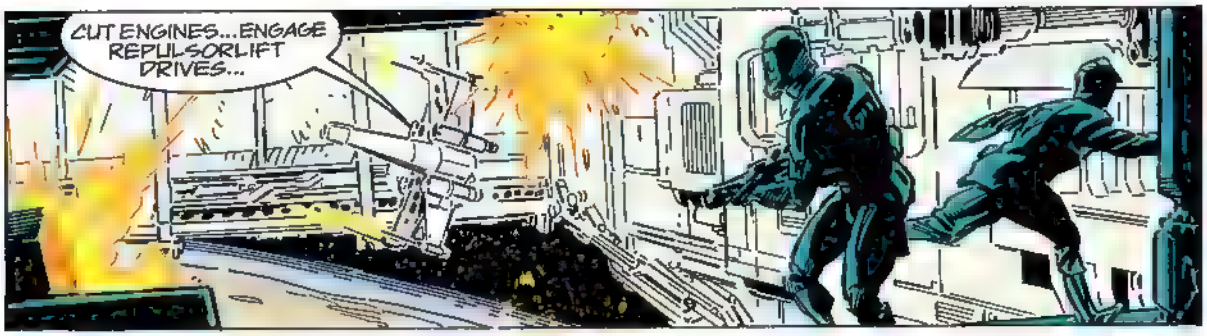

YOU STILL WITH US, PLOURR?!
YEAH...IF THE LANDING DOESN'T KILL ME!

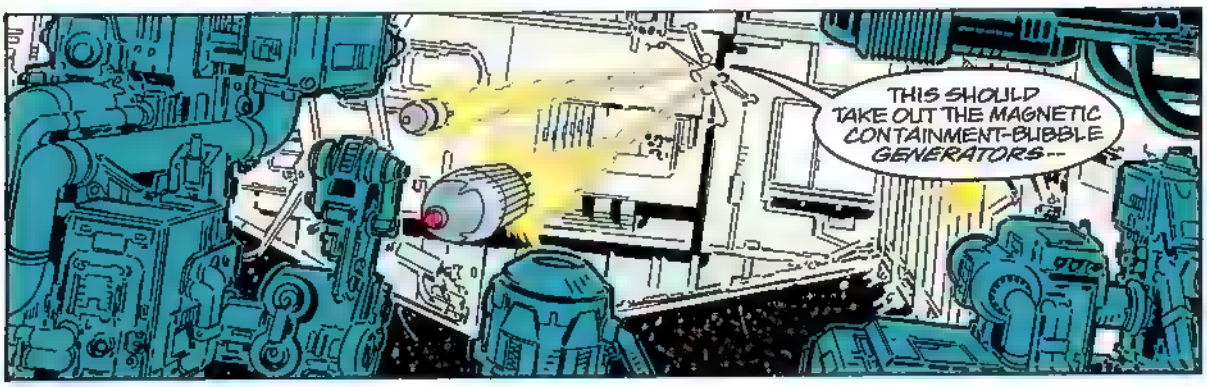
I'M GOING AFTER HER!
BE CAREFUL, KAPP!
GIVE IT UP, KAPP! THIS SHIP COULD BLOW AT ANY SECOND!
THEN QUIT DISTRACTING ME WITH A LOT OF CHATTER!

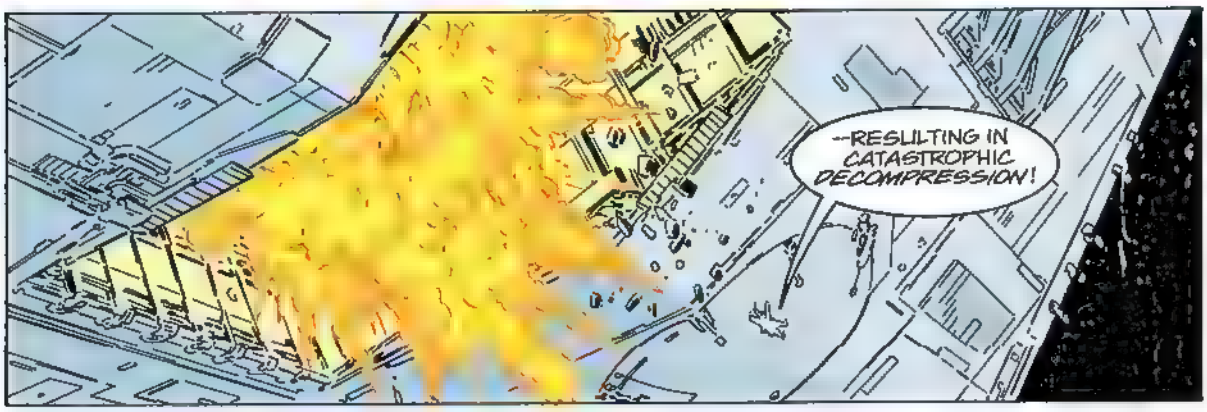

GET READY TO RUN!
MY ANKLE...!
LEAN ON ME! WE'RE ALMOST IN THE CLEAR!

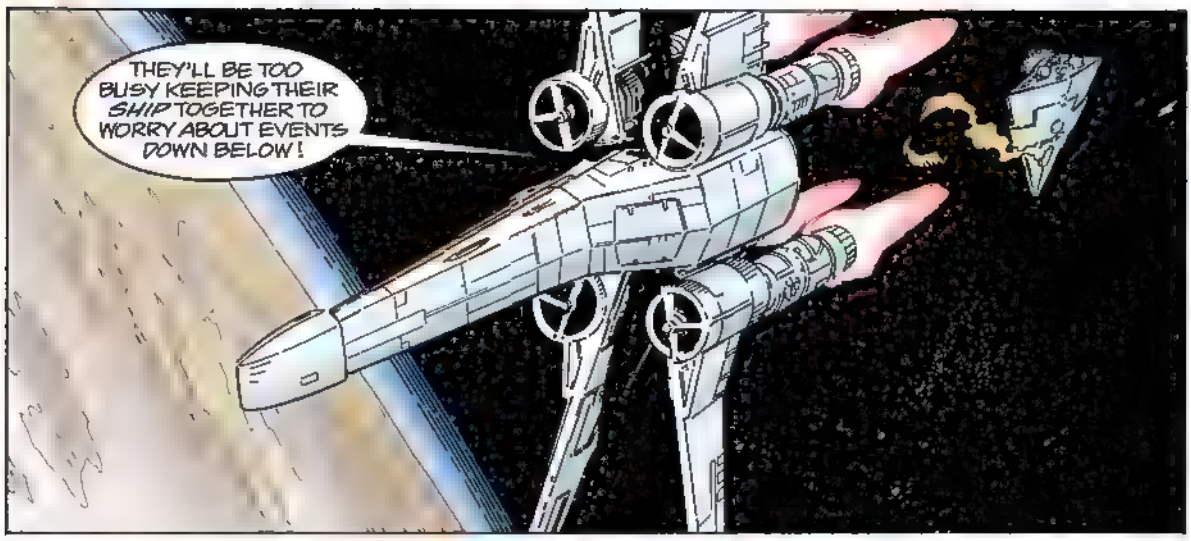

MY ONLY CHANCE IS TO SLIP INSIDE THE SHIELDS AT THE BELLY!
I'M IN! NOW TO TRY SOMETHING---

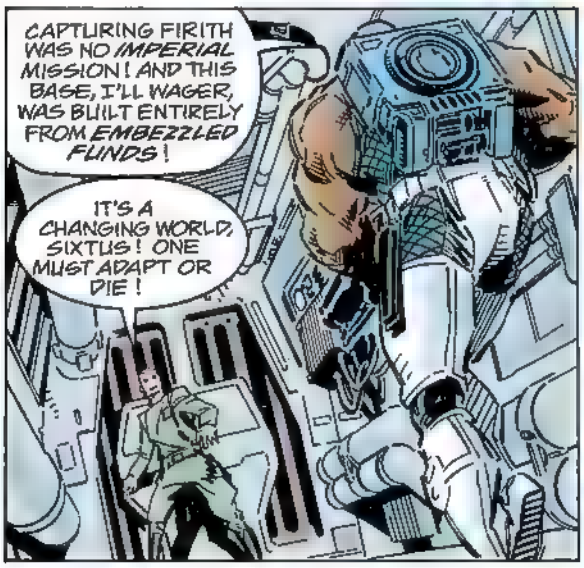
--I'VE WANTED TO DO FOR A LONG TIME!


CUT ENGINES...ENGAGE REPULSORLIFT DRIVES...

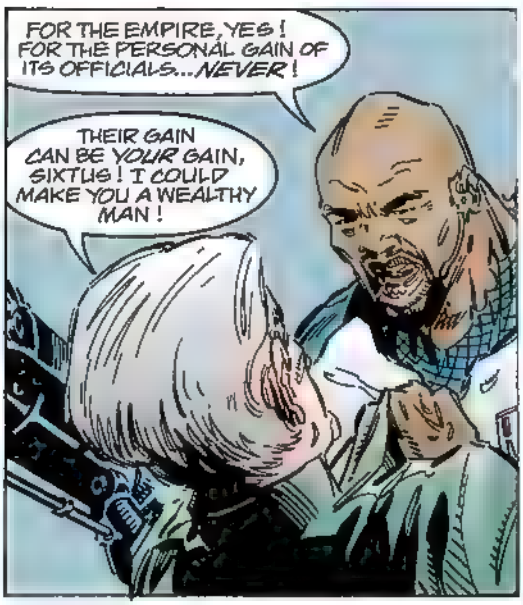

THIS SHOULD TAKE OUT THE MAGNETIC CONTAINMENT-BUBBLE GENERATORS--


--RESULTING IN CATASTROPHIC DECOMPRESSION!

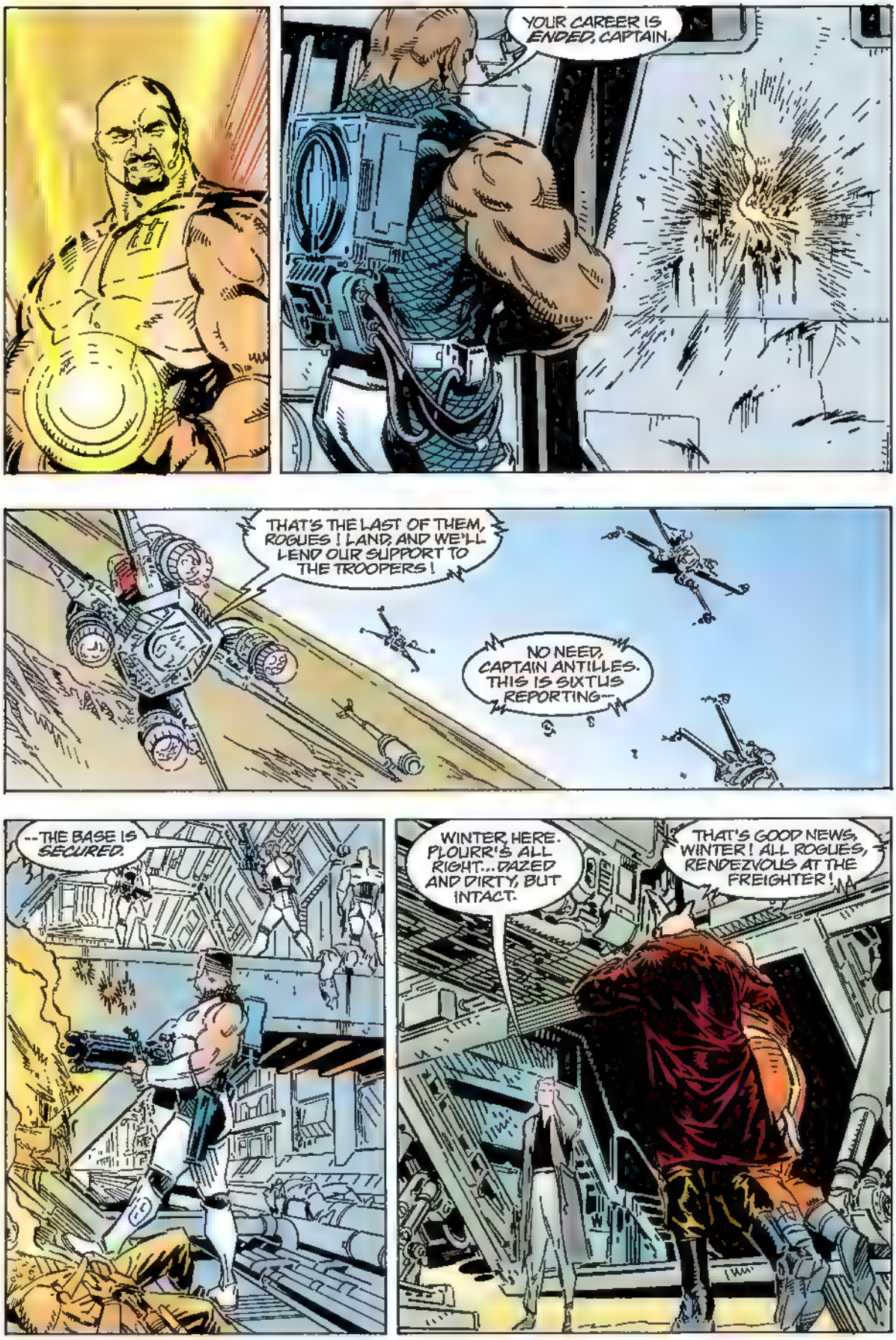

THEY'LL BE TOO BUSY KEEPING THEIR SHIP TOGETHER TO WORRY ABOUT EVENTS DOWN BELOW!


CAPTURING FIRITH WAS NO IMPERIAL MISSION! AND THIS BASE, I'LL WAGER, WAS BUILT ENTIRELY FROM EMBEZZLED FUNDS!
IT'S A CHANGING WORLD, SIXTUS! ONE MUST ADAPT OR DIE!

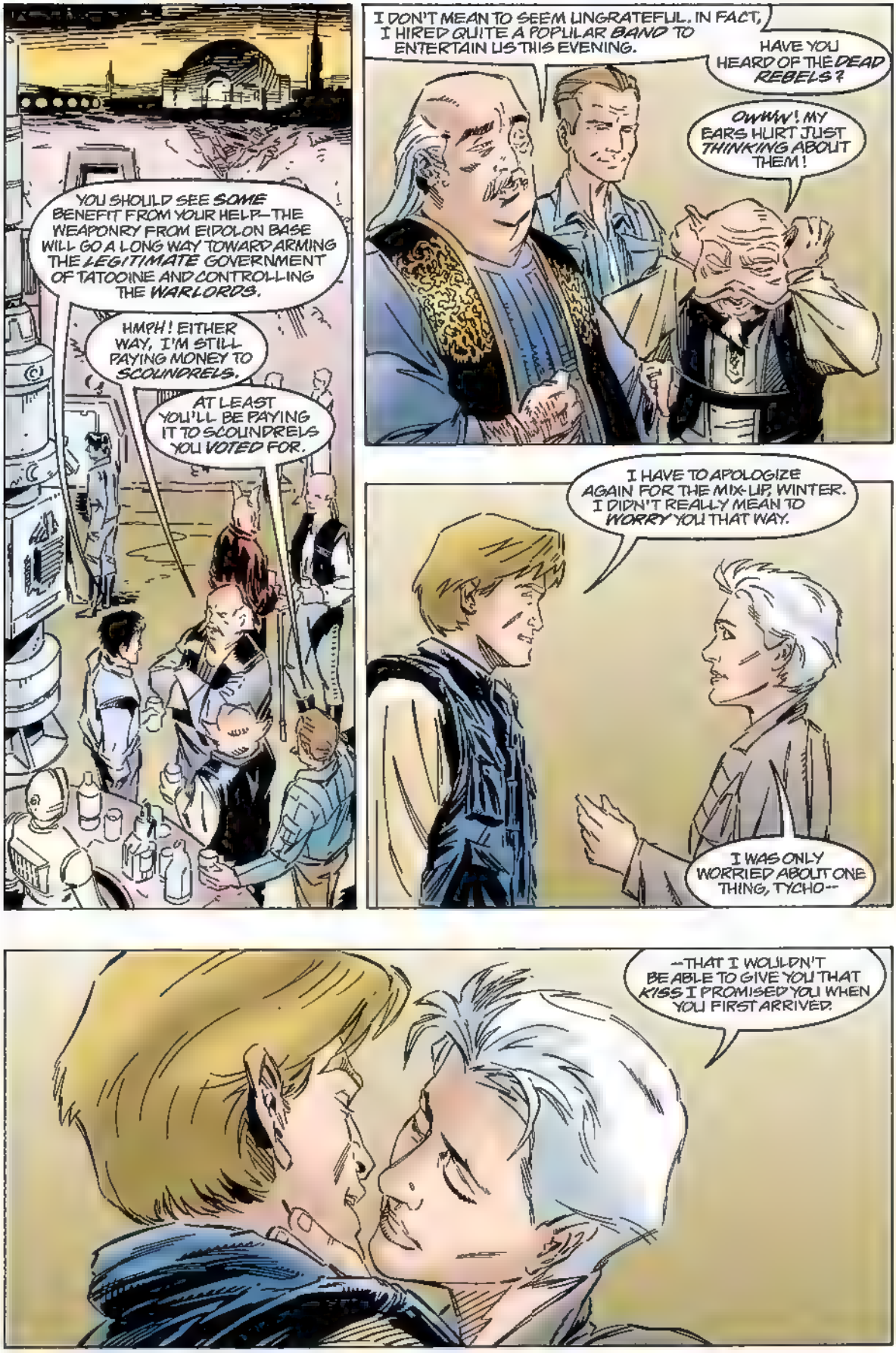
EVEN IF IT MEANS ABANDONING YOUR OWN MEN TO SLAVERY!?
I TOLD YOU THE MISSION WOULD INVOLVE SACRIFICES! YOU SHOULD BE WILLING TO GIVE UP YOUR VERY LIFE FOR YOUR EMPEROR!

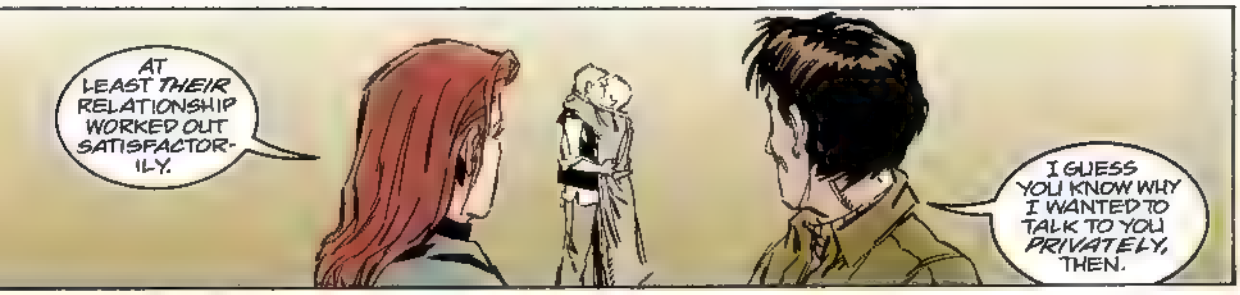

FOR THE EMPIRE, YES! FOR THE PERSONAL GAIN OF ITS OFFICIALS...NEVER!
THEIR GAIN CAN BE YOUR GAIN, SIXTUS! I COULD MAKE YOU A WEALTHY MAN!

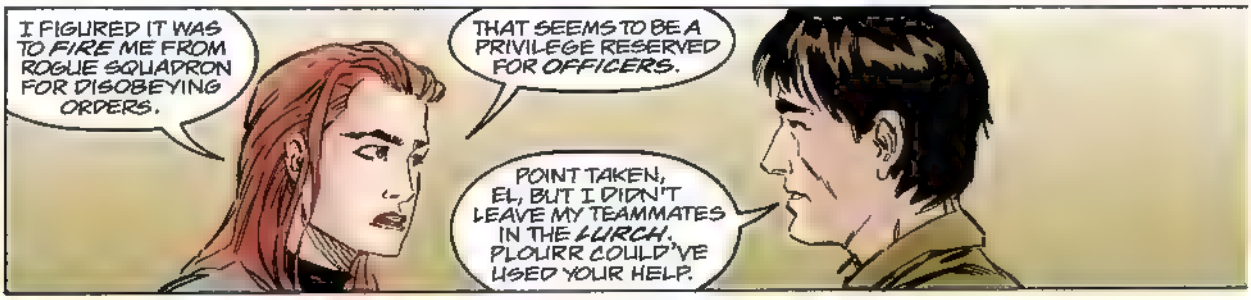
I CARE ONLY ABOUT HONOR, AND YOU, SEMTIN, HAVE NONE!

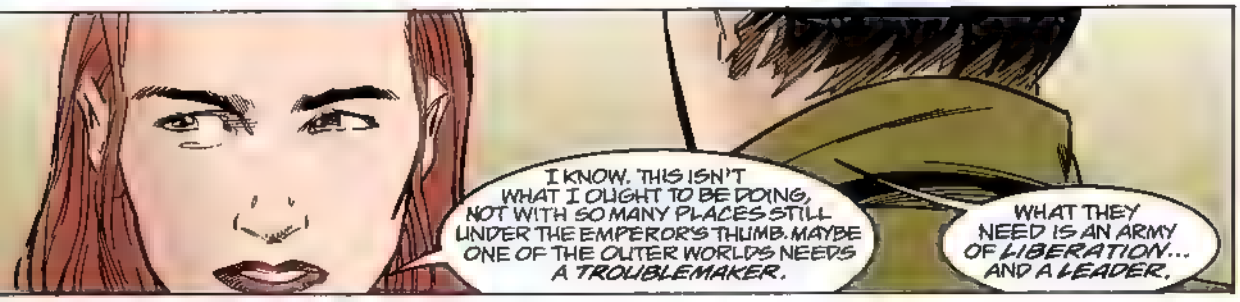

YOUR CAREER IS ENDED, CAPTAIN.
THAT'S THE LAST OF THEM, ROGUES ! LAND, AND WE'LL LEND OUR SUPPORT TO THE TROOPERS !
NO NEED, CAPTAIN ANTILLES. THIS IS SIXTUS REPORTING--
--THE BASE IS SECURED.
WINTER, HERE. PLOURR'S ALL RIGHT...DAZED AND DIRTY, BUT INTACT.
THAT'S GOOD NEWS, WINTER ! ALL ROGUES, RENDEZVOUS AT THE FREIGHTER !

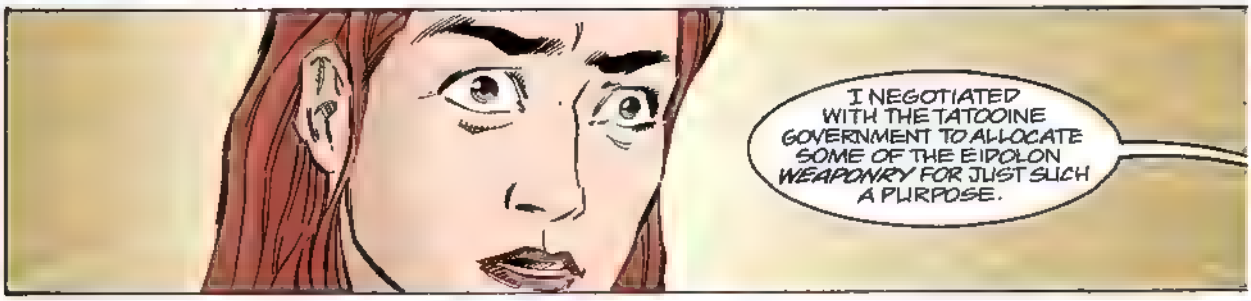
WINTER... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
IT'S JUST... IT'S TYCHO. I TRIED NOT TO LET HIM GET UNDER MY SKIN BECAUSE... WELL--
--I KNEW HOW MUCH IT WOULD HURT IF I LOST HIM.
I GUESS I DIDN'T DO SUCH A GOOD JOB OF IT, BECAUSE IT HURTS LIKE YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE...
TYCHO! THANKS FOR REMINDING ME... I FORGOT ALL ABOUT HIM!
FORGOT!? HOW COULD YOU FORGET!? HE WAS YOUR FRIEND... YOUR... YOUR...!
TAKE IT EASY! HE'S PROBABLY SITTING IN THE SHADE WAITING FOR US TO PICK HIM UP!
HE SAID HE WAS "GOING OUT WITH A BANG." THAT MEANS HE'S DITCHING HIS X-WING AND LETTING THE R2 UNIT TAKE IT ON A SUICIDE RUN!
IT'S A CODE PHRASE WE USE SO WE DON'T TIP OFF THE ENEMY! DIDN'T YOU KNOW?
I GUESS NOT.

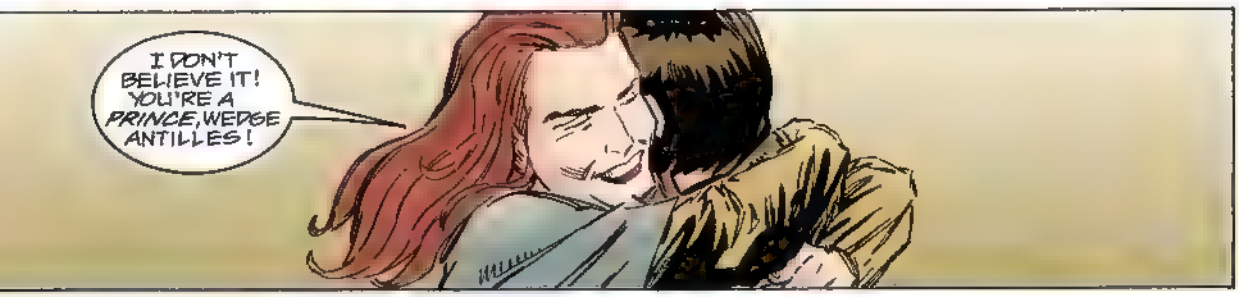

YOU SHOULD SEE SOME BENEFIT FROM YOUR HELP—THE WEAPONRY FROM EIDOLON BASE WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARD ARMING THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF TATOOINE AND CONTROLLING THE WARLORDS.
HMPH! EITHER WAY, I'M STILL PAYING MONEY TO SCOUNDRELS.
AT LEAST YOU'LL BE PAYING IT TO SCOUNDRELS YOU VOTED FOR.
I DON'T MEAN TO SEEM UNGRATEFUL. IN FACT, I HIRED QUITE A POPULAR BAND TO ENTERTAIN US THIS EVENING.
HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE DEAD REBELS?
OWWW! MY EARS HURT JUST THINKING ABOUT THEM!
I HAVE TO APOLOGIZE AGAIN FOR THE MIX-UP, WINTER. I DIDN'T REALLY MEAN TO WORRY YOU THAT WAY.
I WAS ONLY WORRIED ABOUT ONE THING, TYCHO--
--THAT I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU THAT KISS I PROMISED YOU WHEN YOU FIRST ARRIVED.

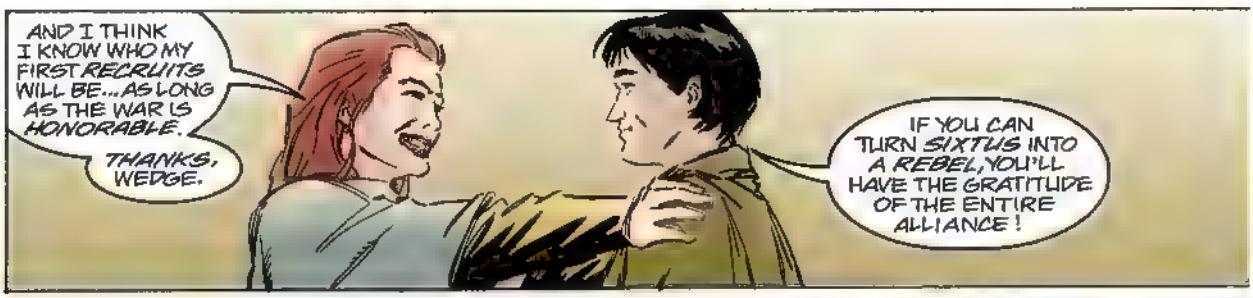

AT LEAST THEIR RELATIONSHIP WORKED OUT SATISFACTORILY.
I GUESS YOU KNOW WHY I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU PRIVATELY, THEN.


I FIGURED IT WAS TO FIRE ME FROM ROGUE SQUADRON FOR DISOBEYING ORDERS.
THAT SEEMS TO BE A PRIVILEGE RESERVED FOR OFFICERS.
POINT TAKEN, EL, BUT I DIDN'T LEAVE MY TEAMMATES IN THE LURCH. PLOURR COULD'VE USED YOUR HELP.

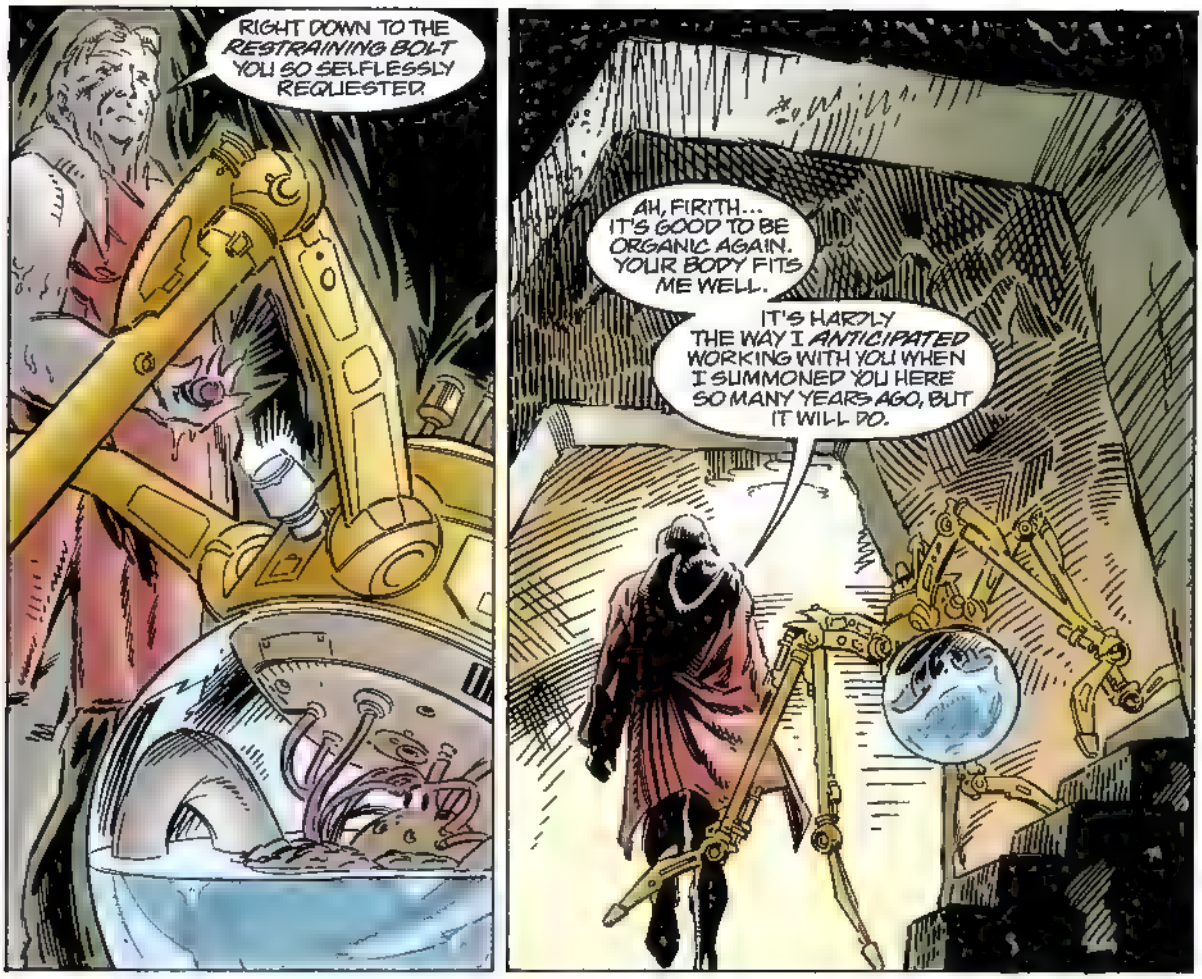

I KNOW. THIS ISN'T WHAT I OUGHT TO BE DOING, NOT WITH SO MANY PLACES STILL UNDER THE EMPEROR'S THUMB. MAYBE ONE OF THE OUTER WORLDS NEEDS A TROUBLEMAKER.
WHAT THEY NEED IS AN ARMY OF LIBERATION... AND A LEADER.

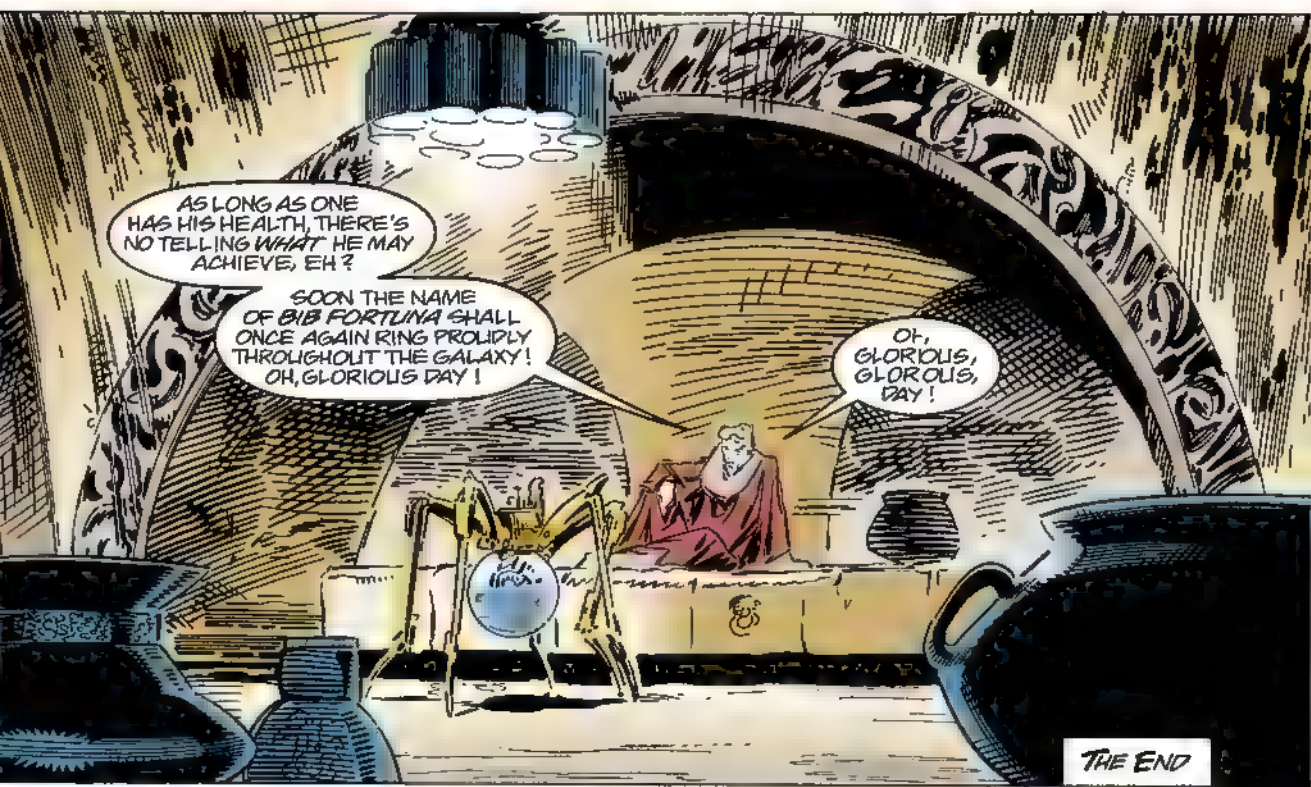

I NEGOTIATED WITH THE TATOOINE GOVERNMENT TO ALLOCATE SOME OF THE EIDOLON WEAPONRY FOR JUST SUCH A PURPOSE.


I DON'T BELIEVE IT! YOU'RE A PRINCE, WEDGE ANTILLES!


AND I THINK I KNOW WHO MY FIRST RECRUITS WILL BE... AS LONG AS THE WAR IS HONORABLE.
THANKS, WEDGE.
IF YOU CAN TURN SIXTUS INTO A REBEL, YOU'LL HAVE THE GRATITUDE OF THE ENTIRE ALLIANCE!

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU SO COMPLETELY RECOVERED, SIR.
YOU WERE IN SHOCK WHEN YOU ARRIVED. IF THE SPIDER-DROID HADN'T COMPELLED THE MONKS TO ATTEND TO YOU IMMEDIATELY, I DOUBT YOU WOULD HAVE PULLED THROUGH.
YES, I OWE MUCH TO THAT DROID.
THESE SCARS, HOWEVER, ARE MOST PUZZLING. THEY ARE MORE COMMONLY THE RESULT OF A BRAIN TRANSFER THAN THE KIND OF WOUND YOU SUFFERED.
I'M SURE THE MONKS DID ONLY AS THEY WERE INSTRUCTED.
EXACTLY AS THEY WERE INSTRUCTED, EH, DROID?


RIGHT DOWN TO THE RESTRAINING BOLT YOU SO SELFLESSLY REQUESTED.
AH, FIRITH... IT'S GOOD TO BE ORGANIC AGAIN. YOUR BODY FITS ME WELL.
IT'S HARDLY THE WAY I ANTICIPATED WORKING WITH YOU WHEN I SUMMONED YOU HERE SO MANY YEARS AGO, BUT IT WILL DO.


AS LONG AS ONE HAS HIS HEALTH, THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT HE MAY ACHIEVE, EH?
SOON THE NAME OF BIB FORTUNA SHALL ONCE AGAIN RING PROUDLY THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY! OH, GLORIOUS DAY!
OH, GLORIOUS, GLORIOUS, DAY!
THE END

Warrior Princess, illustration by Mark Harrison

[redacted]

[redacted]

script by Scott Tolson

pencils by John Nadeau

inks by Jordi Ensign

colors by Dave Nestelle

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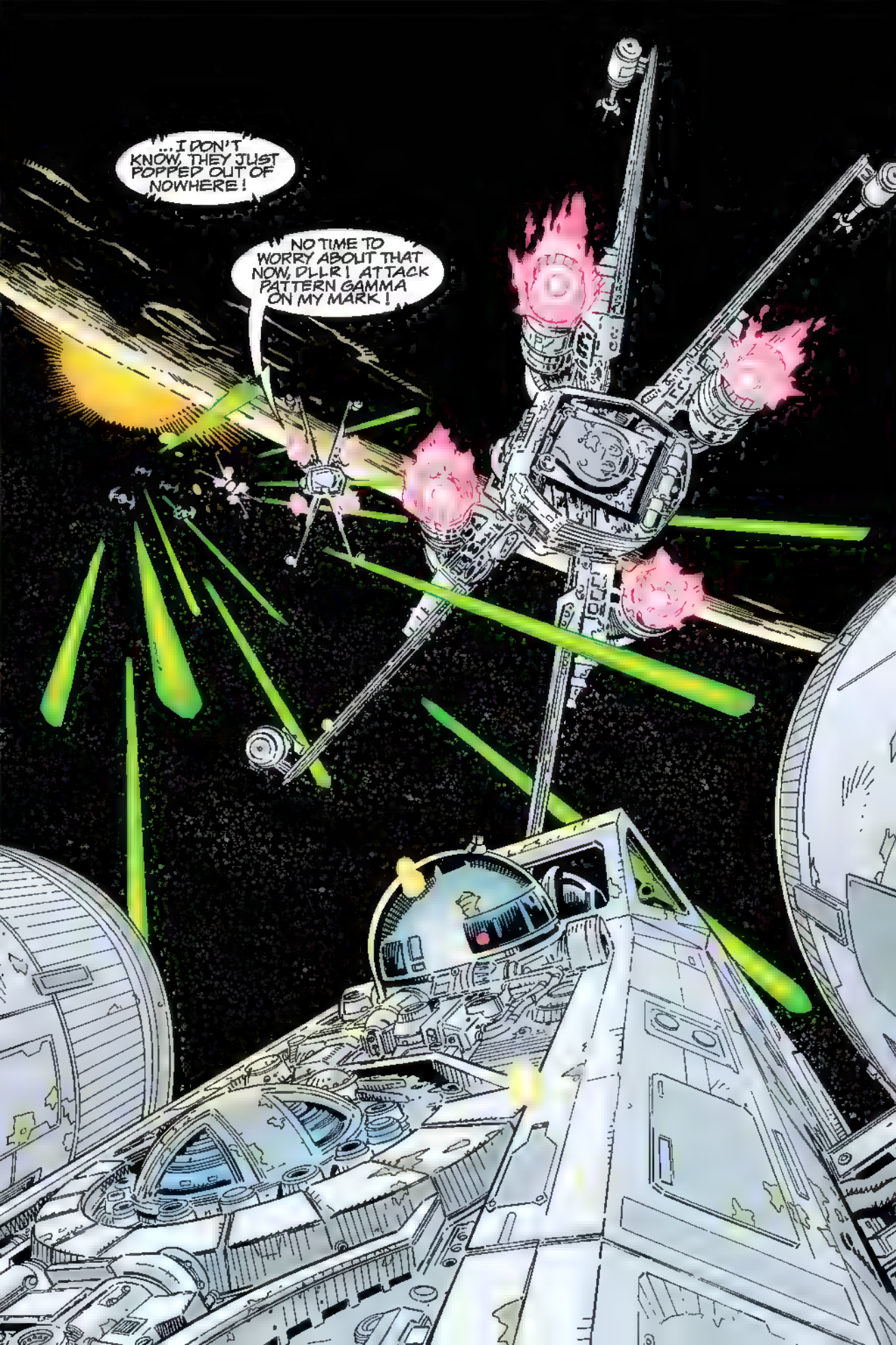
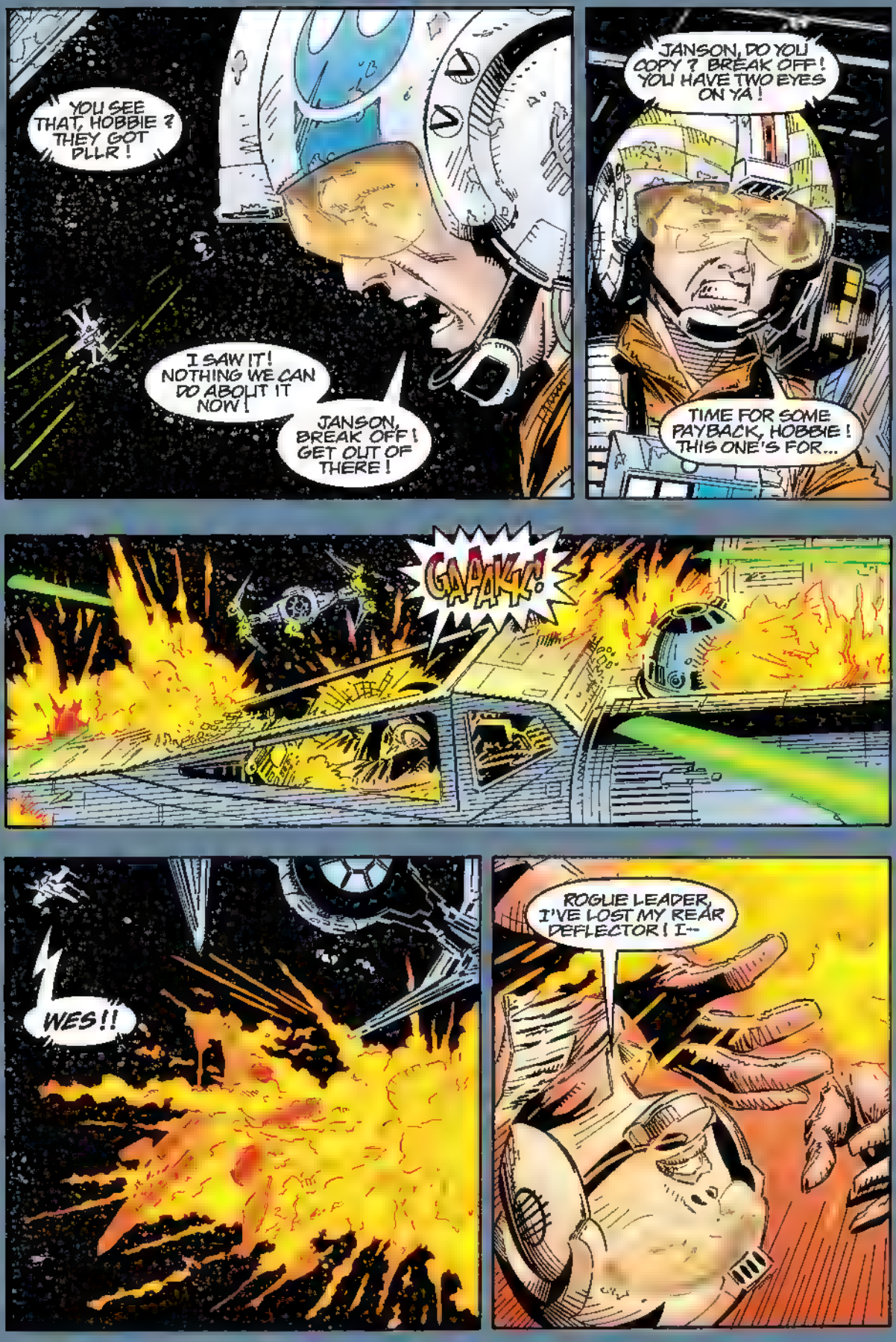
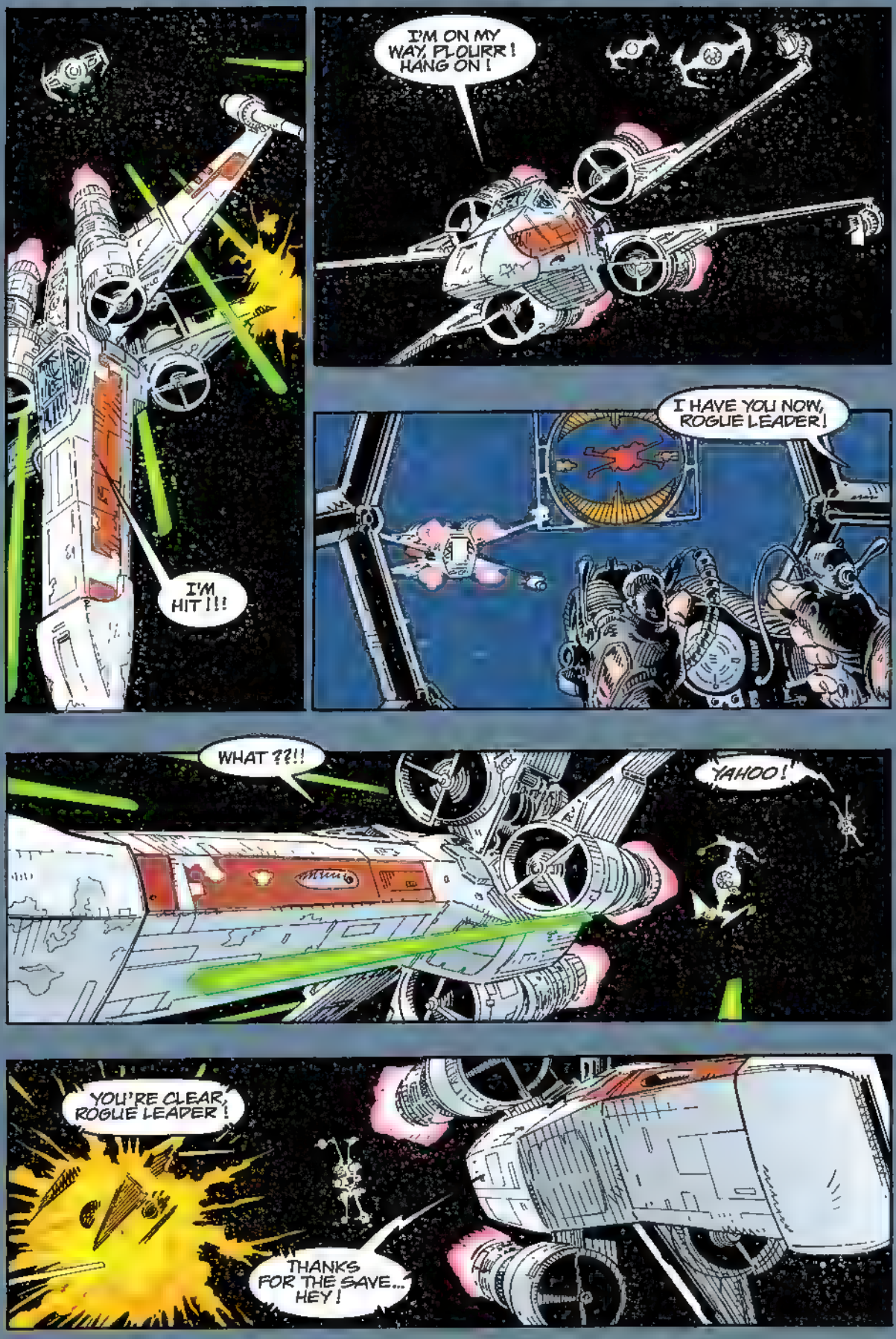
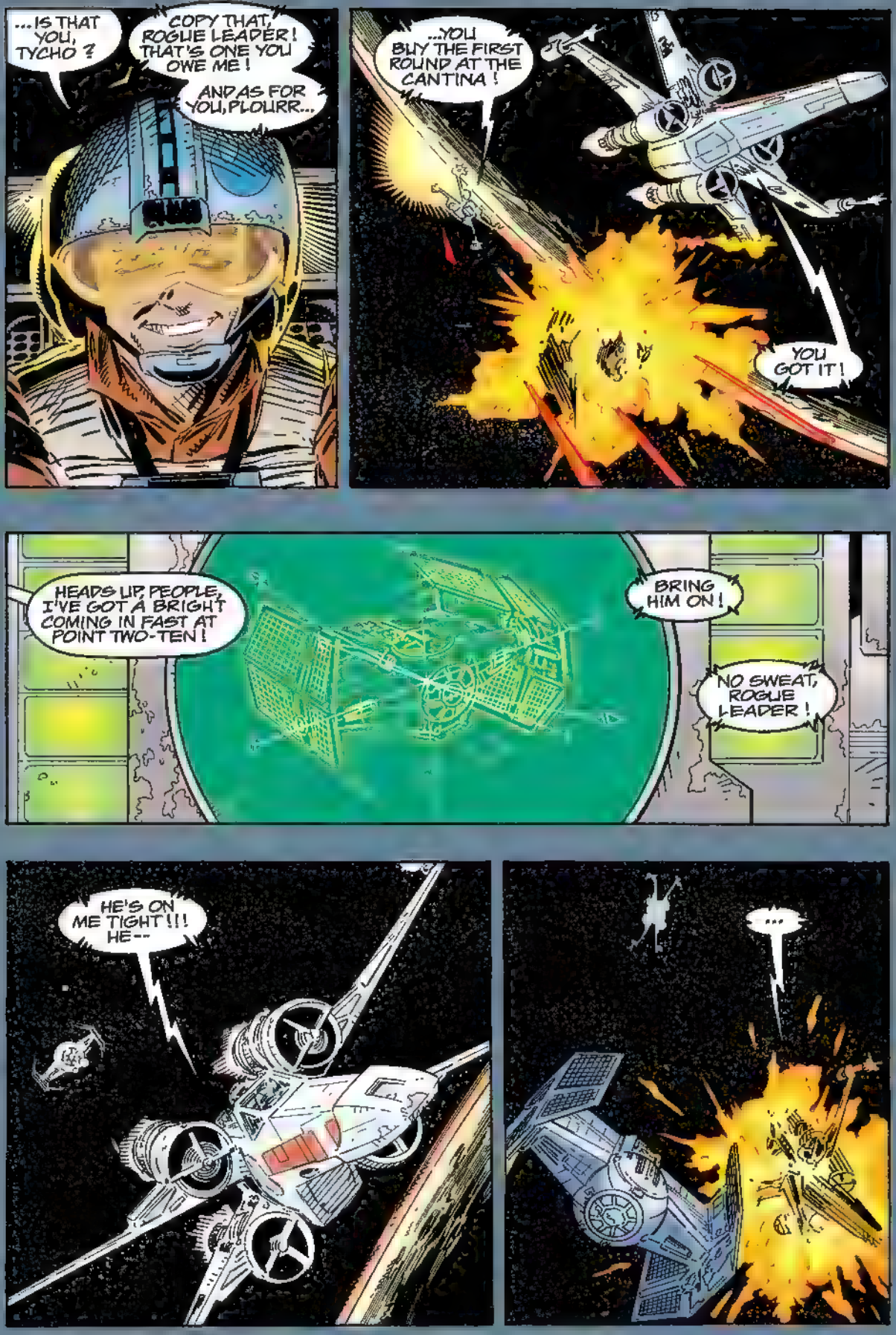

...I DON'T KNOW, THEY JUST POPPED OUT OF NOWHERE!
NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THAT NOW, DLLR! ATTACK PATTERN GAMMA ON MY MARK!

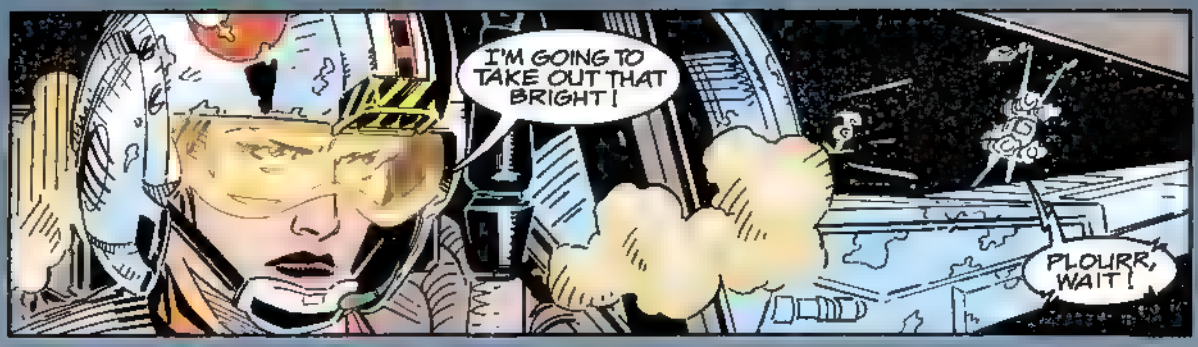
NOW!
ALL RIGHT, ROGUE SQUADRON, YOU KNOW THE DRILL-- SHAKE 'EM AND BAKE 'EM!
COPY THAT, ROGUE LEADER!
...NOTHING ON MY SCANNERS AND THEN... COPY THAT, BOSS!
AFFIRMATIVE, ROGUE LEADER! BLAST 'EM!
WAAAHOOO!!!

WATCH IT, DLLR! YOU'VE GOT A SQUINT ON YOUR TAIL!
I KNOW, I KNOW! I CAN'T SHAKE HIM!
HE'S ALL OVER ME! MY R2 UNIT'S HIT! STABILIZER'S BUCKLING!
SCISSOR RIGHT, DLLR, I'LL GET HIM OFF YA!
SCISSOR RIGHT DLLR! SCISSOR RIGHT!
DLLR!
AAAGGHHH--

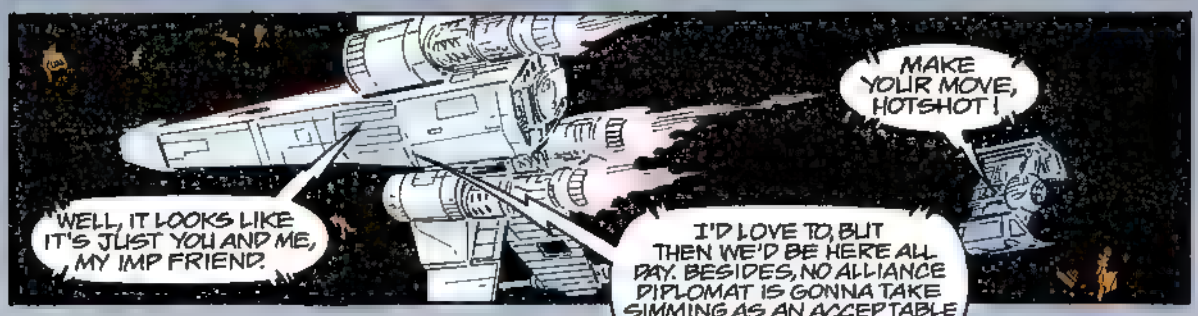

YOU SEE THAT, HOBBIE ? THEY GOT DLLR !
I SAW IT ! NOTHING WE CAN DO ABOUT IT NOW !
JANSON, BREAK OFF ! GET OUT OF THERE !
JANSON, DO YOU COPY ? BREAK OFF ! YOU HAVE TWO EYES ON YA !
TIME FOR SOME PAYBACK, HOBBIE ! THIS ONE'S FOR...
GAAAK!
WES!!
ROGUE LEADER, I'VE LOST MY REAR DEFLECTOR ! I--


I'M ON MY WAY, FLOURR! HANG ON!
I'M HIT!!!
I HAVE YOU NOW, ROGUE LEADER!
WHAT??!!
YAHOO!
YOU'RE CLEAR, ROGUE LEADER!
THANKS FOR THE SAVE... HEY!

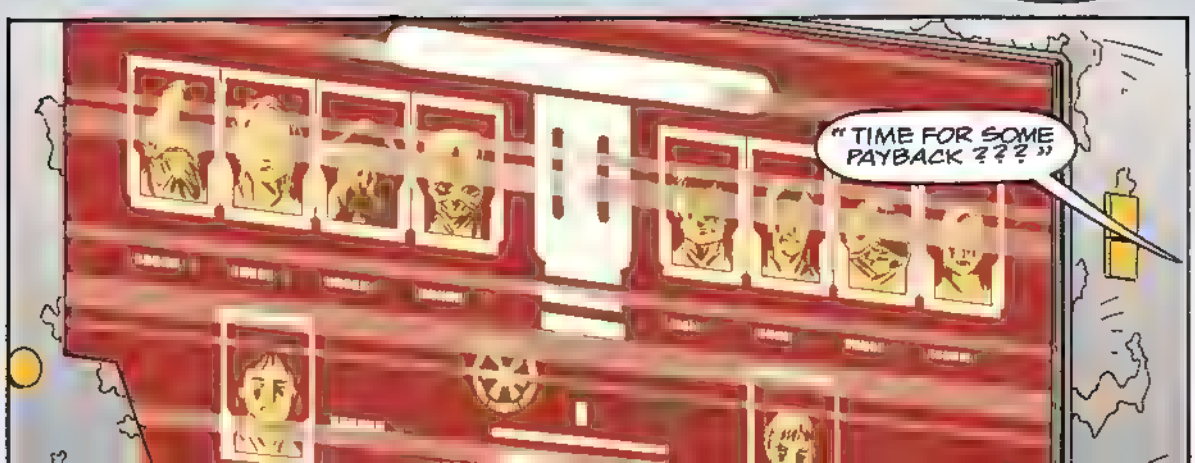

...IS THAT YOU, TYCHO ?
COPY THAT, ROGUE LEADER! THAT'S ONE YOU OWE ME!
AND AS FOR YOU, PLOURR...
...YOU BUY THE FIRST ROUND AT THE CANTINA !
YOU GOT IT !
HEADS UP, PEOPLE, I'VE GOT A BRIGHT COMING IN FAST AT POINT TWO-TEN !
BRING HIM ON !
NO SWEAT, ROGUE LEADER !
HE'S ON ME TIGHT !!! HE--
...

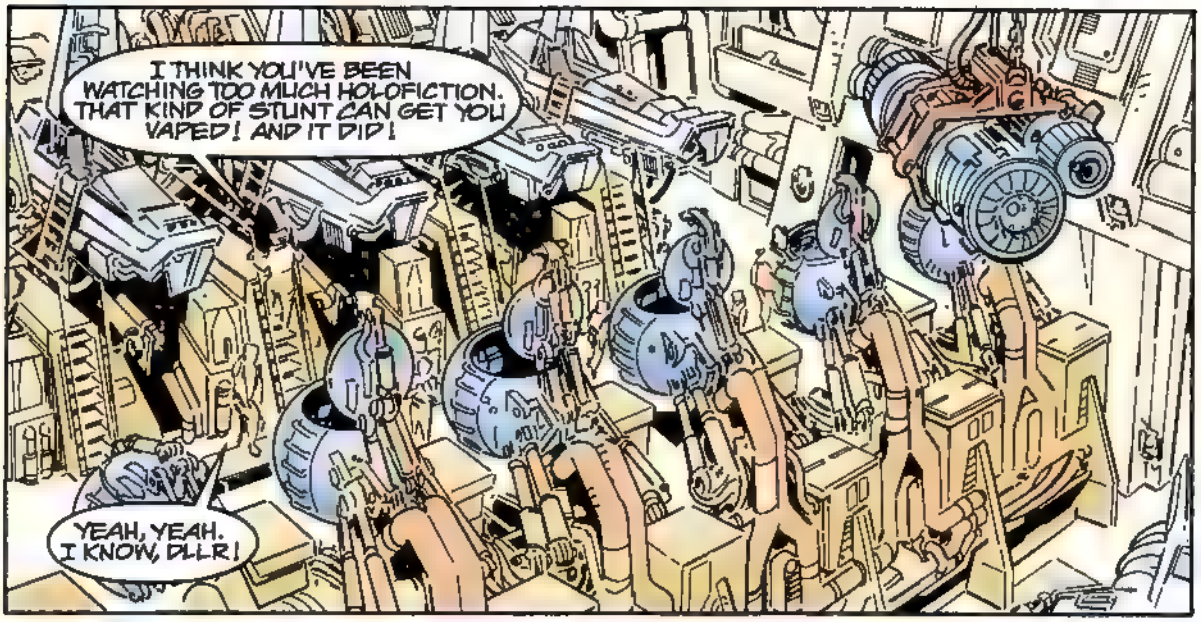

I'M GOING TO TAKE OUT THAT BRIGHT!
PLOURR, WAIT!

...PLOURR!!

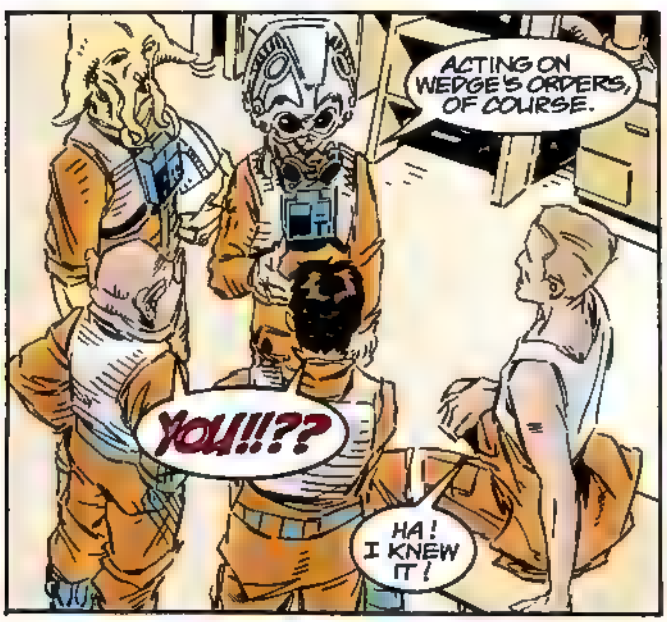

MAKE YOUR MOVE, HOTSHOT!
WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S JUST YOU AND ME, MY IMP FRIEND.
I'D LOVE TO, BUT THEN WE'D BE HERE ALL DAY. BESIDES, NO ALLIANCE DIPLOMAT IS GONNA TAKE SIMMING AS AN ACCEPTABLE EXCUSE FOR BEING LATE.

YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT. BUT I DON'T THINK IT WOULD TAKE ME THAT LONG TO WAX YOUR TAIL, TYCHO.
HA! YOU AND THE WHOLE IMP FIGHTER CORPS. WE'LL DO THIS AGAIN!
I'LL CATCH YOU OUTSIDE, WEDGE!

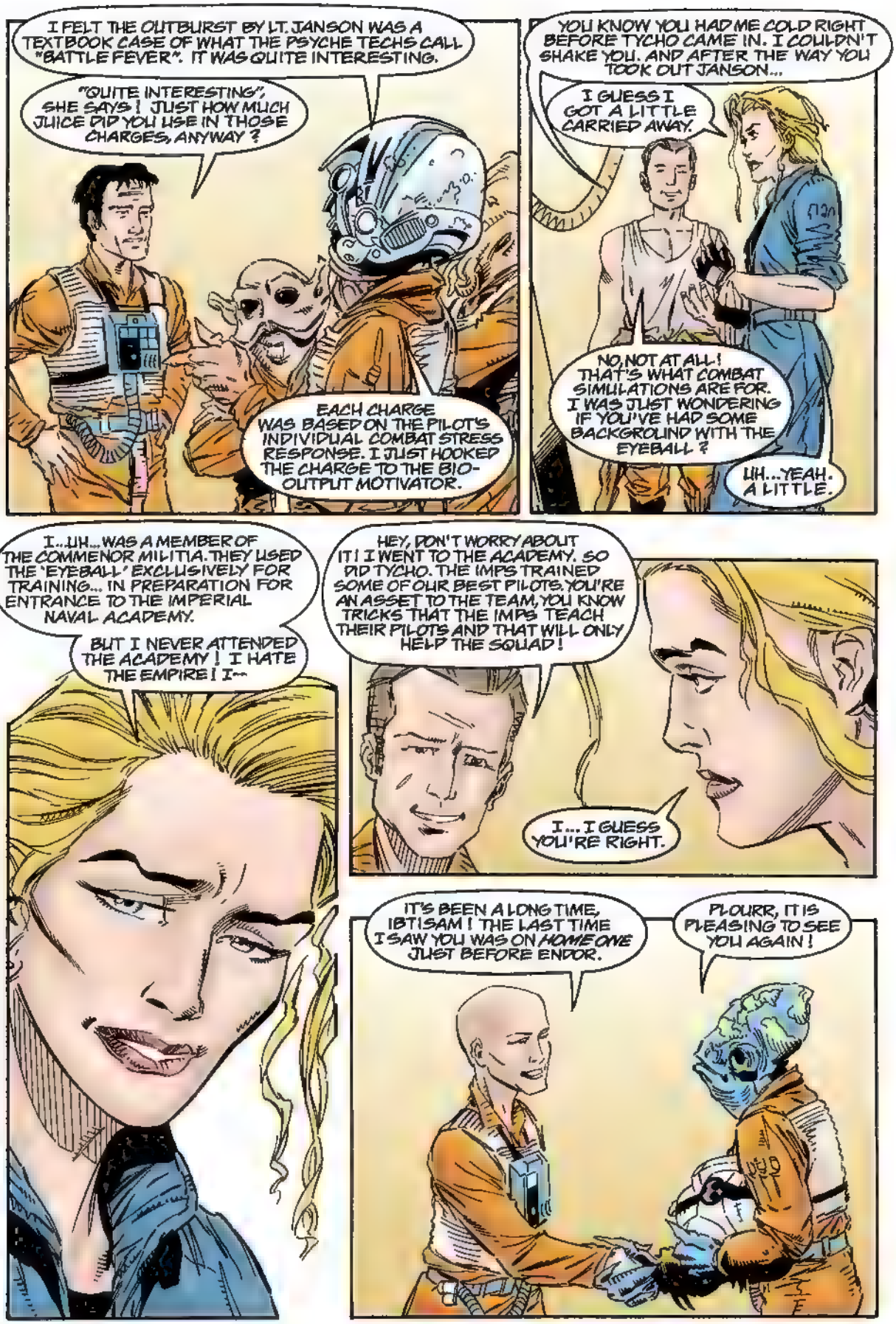

"TIME FOR SOME PAYBACK ???"


I THINK YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING TOO MUCH HOLOFICTION. THAT KIND OF STUNT CAN GET YOU VAPED! AND IT DID!
YEAH, YEAH. I KNOW, DLLR!

YEAH! WHO RIGGED THE SIMULATOR SEATS WITH AN ELECTRICAL CHARGE, ANYWAY? THAT WAS SOME ZAP!
I FELT THE SENSATION TO BE... EXHILARATING!
IT'S JUST WHEN I HEARD YOU SCREAM, SIMULATOR OR NOT, YOU SOUNDED LIKE YOU WERE REALLY HURT. NOW I KNOW WHAT MADE YOU DO THAT.
I'VE GOT AN IDEA!
YEAH, YOU WOULD, NRIN!
UM... WELL... IT WAS ME.

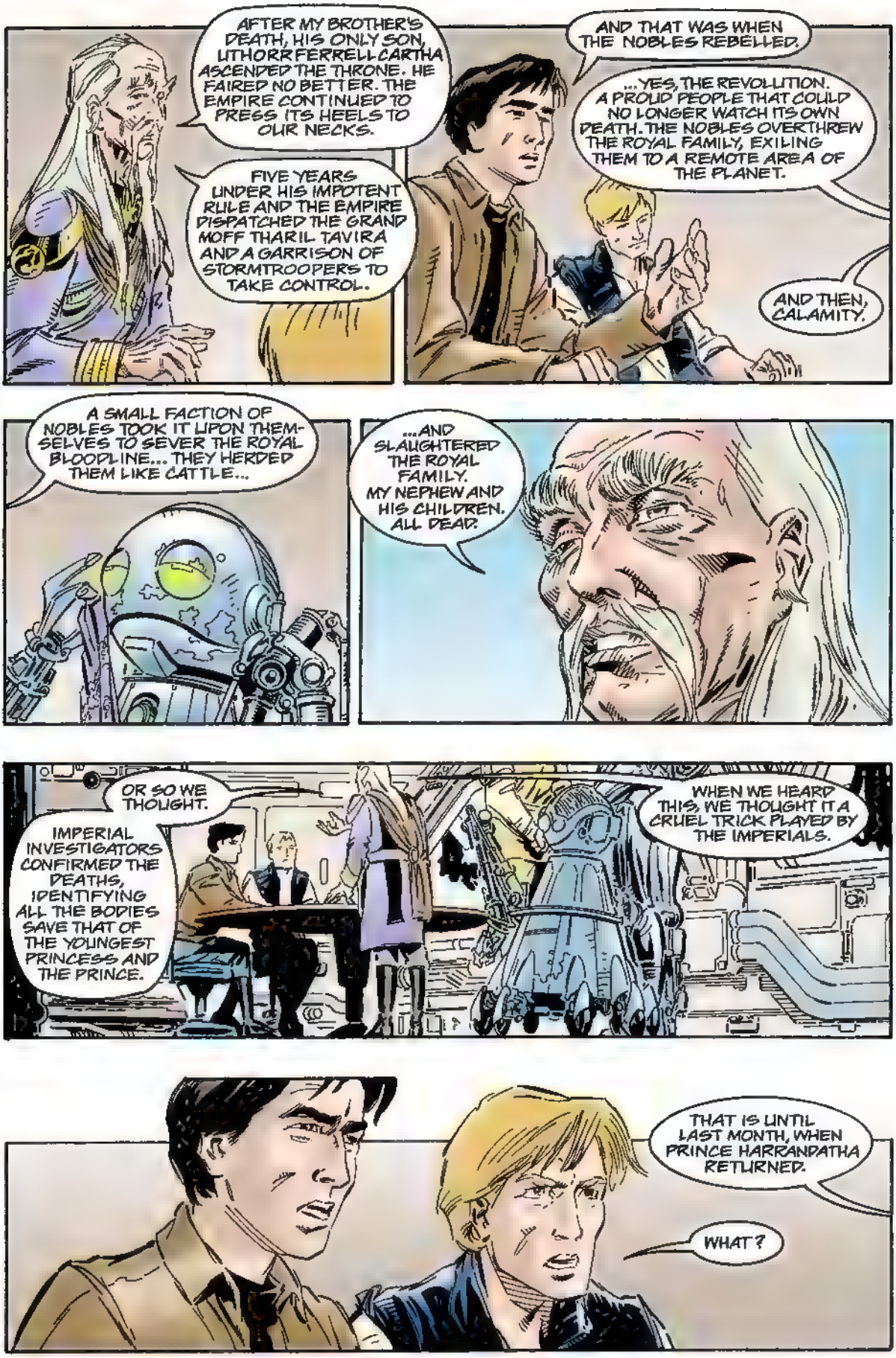

ACTING ON WEDGE'S ORDERS, OF COURSE.
YOU!!??
HA! I KNEW IT!

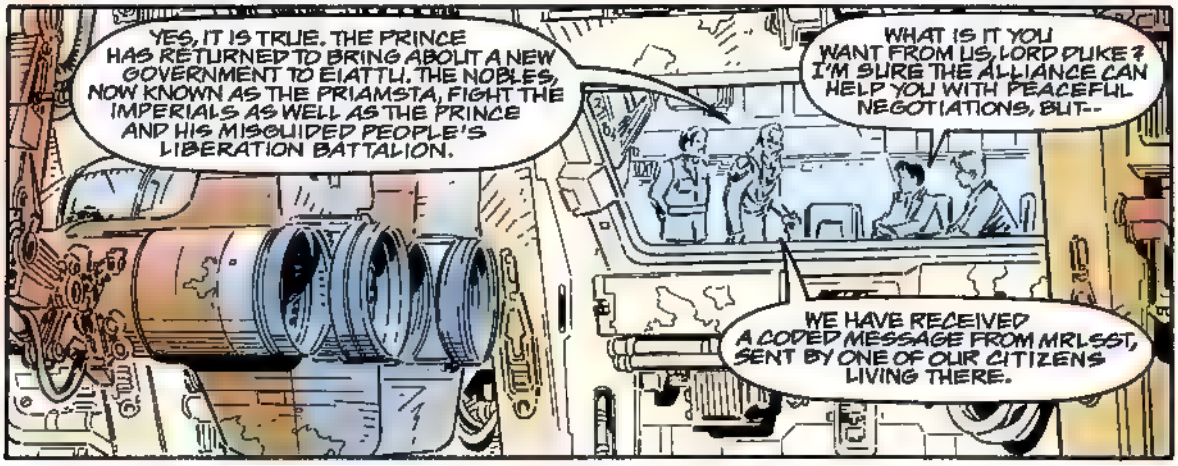
YOU SEE, WEDGE BELIEVED THAT THE SIMULATOR LACKED THE PROPER AMOUNT OF REALISM FOR SUCH BATTLE-HARDENED VETERANS AS OURSELVES.
HE FELT THAT A BIT OF EXTRA SIMULATION WAS REQUIRED TO BRING ABOUT THE PROPER RESPONSE.
AND I CONCURRED.

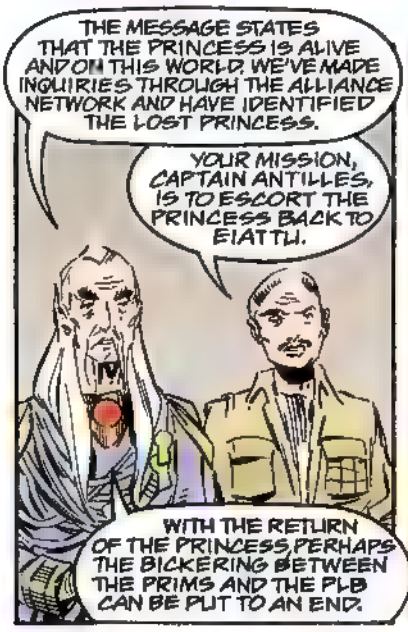

I FELT THE OUTBURST BY LT. JANSON WAS A TEXTBOOK CASE OF WHAT THE PSYCHE TECHS CALL "BATTLE FEVER". IT WAS QUITE INTERESTING.
"QUITE INTERESTING", SHE SAYS! JUST HOW MUCH JUICE DID YOU USE IN THOSE CHARGES, ANYWAY?
EACH CHARGE WAS BASED ON THE PILOT'S INDIVIDUAL COMBAT STRESS RESPONSE. I JUST HOOKED THE CHARGE TO THE BIO-OUTPUT MOTIVATOR.
YOU KNOW YOU HAD ME COLD RIGHT BEFORE TYCHO CAME IN. I COULDN'T SHAKE YOU. AND AFTER THE WAY YOU TOOK OUT JANSON...
I GUESS I GOT A LITTLE CARRIED AWAY.
NO, NOT AT ALL! THAT'S WHAT COMBAT SIMULATIONS ARE FOR. I WAS JUST WONDERING IF YOU'VE HAD SOME BACKGROUND WITH THE EYEBALL?
UH...YEAH. A LITTLE.
I...UH...WAS A MEMBER OF THE COMMENOR MILITIA. THEY USED THE 'EYEBALL' EXCLUSIVELY FOR TRAINING... IN PREPARATION FOR ENTRANCE TO THE IMPERIAL NAVAL ACADEMY.
BUT I NEVER ATTENDED THE ACADEMY! I HATE THE EMPIRE! I--
HEY, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT! I WENT TO THE ACADEMY. SO DID TYCHO. THE IMPS TRAINED SOME OF OUR BEST PILOTS. YOU'RE AN ASSET TO THE TEAM, YOU KNOW TRICKS THAT THE IMPS TEACH THEIR PILOTS AND THAT WILL ONLY HELP THE SQUAD!
I... I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME, IBTISAM! THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU WAS ON HOME ONE JUST BEFORE ENDOR.
PLOURR, IT IS PLEASING TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

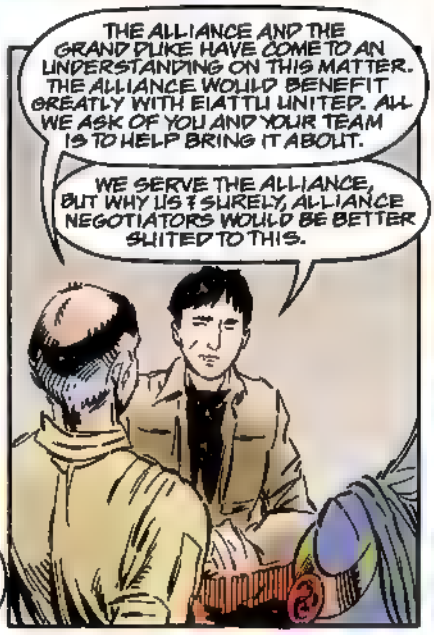
I VOLUNTEERED FOR B-WING TRAINING IN PREPARATION FOR ENDOR. GOT MYSELF A NICE LITTLE SHIP TOO. I HAD HER SOUPED UP FAR BEYOND HER SPECS.
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. SO, WHAT HAPPENED TO HER ?
WE RAN INTO A LITTLE TROUBLE DURING THE SECOND WAVE OVER ENDOR.
THAT'S A DAMNED SHAME.
INDEED.
ROGUE SQUADRON! LISTEN UP!
THAT WAS SOME NICE FLYING, PEOPLE, EVEN IF A LITTLE FOOLHARDY. BUT WE'RE GOING TO NEED MORE SIM WORK TO GET TUNED TO EACH OTHER.
WEDGE AND I HAVE SOME BUSINESS TO TAKE CARE OF, SO WHY DON'T YOU GUYS GET BETTER ACQUAINTED BY GOING OVER SOME DOGFIGHT SCENARIOS.
OVER A FEW MUGS OF THE JUICE!
WHATEVER IT TAKES TO SHARPEN YOUR SKILLS AND DEADEN THE PAIN TO YOUR BACKSIDE, DLLR!

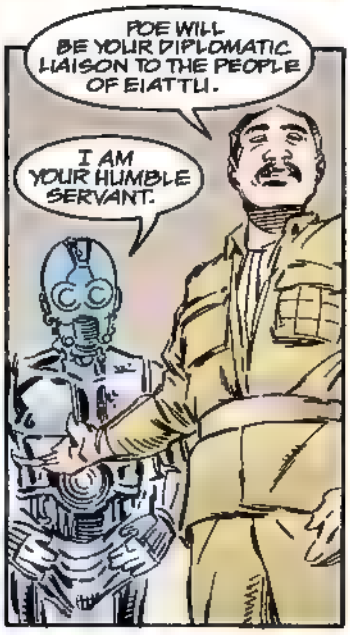
AH, HERE THEY ARE NOW, GRAND DUKE.
CAPTAIN WEDGE ANTILLES, MAY I PRESENT THE GRAND DUKE GROR PERNON.
AN HONOR, SIR. MAY I PRESENT ONE OF MY OFFICERS, LT. TYCHO CELCHU.
MY LORD.
THIS IS POE, THE GRAND DUKE'S PROTOCOL DROID.
WELL, SHALL WE BEGIN, GENTLEMEN? GRAND DUKE.
GENTLEMEN, MY WORLD, EIATTU, IS DYING. A CANCER IS EATING AWAY AT ITS VERY HEART. OUR PEOPLE ARE KILLING EACH OTHER.
WE NEED TO BE MADE WHOLE.
MY WORLD IS A TROUBLED ONE. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN THUS.
YEARS AGO, WITH THE FALL OF THE OLD REPUBLIC, MY BROTHER, EMPEROR ANTBBIANPLOURR III, BARTERED AWAY OUR PRIDE AND OUR HONOR TO KEEP THE THRONE, AND THE IMPERIALS FROM OUR WORLD.
THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE END FOR US.

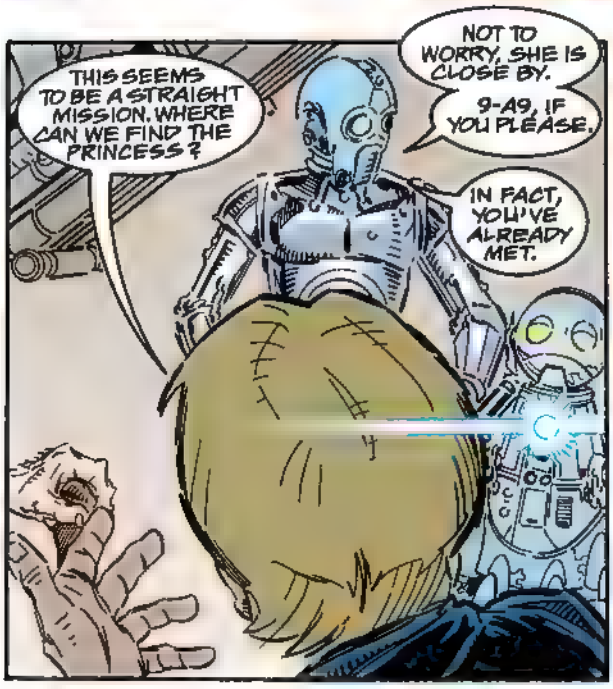

AFTER MY BROTHER'S DEATH, HIS ONLY SON, LITHORR FERRELL CARTHA ASCENDED THE THRONE. HE FAIRED NO BETTER. THE EMPIRE CONTINUED TO PRESS ITS HEELS TO OUR NECKS.
FIVE YEARS UNDER HIS IMPOTENT RULE AND THE EMPIRE DISPATCHED THE GRAND MOFF THARIL TAVIRA AND A GARRISON OF STORMTROOPERS TO TAKE CONTROL.
AND THAT WAS WHEN THE NOBLES REBELLED.
...YES, THE REVOLUTION. A PROUD PEOPLE THAT COULD NO LONGER WATCH ITS OWN DEATH. THE NOBLES OVERTHREW THE ROYAL FAMILY, EXILING THEM TO A REMOTE AREA OF THE PLANET.
AND THEN, CALAMITY.
A SMALL FACTION OF NOBLES TOOK IT UPON THEMSELVES TO SEVER THE ROYAL BLOODLINE... THEY HERDED THEM LIKE CATTLE...
...AND SLAUGHTERED THE ROYAL FAMILY. MY NEPHEW AND HIS CHILDREN. ALL DEAD.
OR SO WE THOUGHT.
IMPERIAL INVESTIGATORS CONFIRMED THE DEATHS, IDENTIFYING ALL THE BODIES SAVE THAT OF THE YOUNGEST PRINCESS AND THE PRINCE.
WHEN WE HEARD THIS, WE THOUGHT IT A CRUEL TRICK PLAYED BY THE IMPERIALS.
THAT IS UNTIL LAST MONTH, WHEN PRINCE HARRANDATHA RETURNED.
WHAT?


YES, IT IS TRUE. THE PRINCE HAS RETURNED TO BRING ABOUT A NEW GOVERNMENT TO EIATTU. THE NOBLES, NOW KNOWN AS THE PRIAMSTA, FIGHT THE IMPERIALS AS WELL AS THE PRINCE AND HIS MISGUIDED PEOPLE'S LIBERATION BATTALION.
WHAT IS IT YOU WANT FROM US, LORD DUKE? I'M SURE THE ALLIANCE CAN HELP YOU WITH PEACEFUL NEGOTIATIONS, BUT--
WE HAVE RECEIVED A CODED MESSAGE FROM MRLSST, SENT BY ONE OF OUR CITIZENS LIVING THERE.

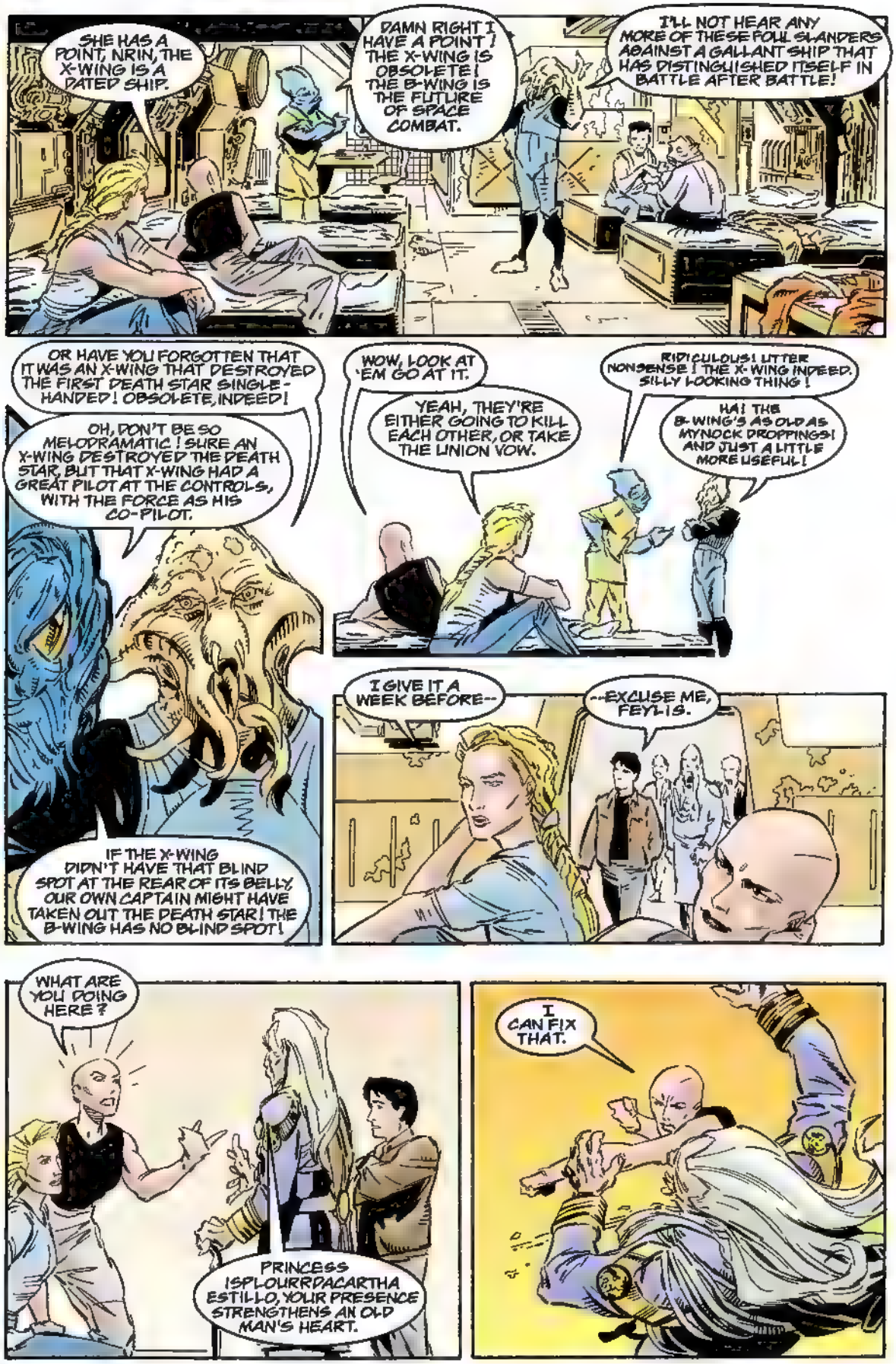

THE MESSAGE STATES THAT THE PRINCESS IS ALIVE AND ON THIS WORLD. WE'VE MADE INQUIRIES THROUGH THE ALLIANCE NETWORK AND HAVE IDENTIFIED THE LOST PRINCESS.
YOUR MISSION, CAPTAIN ANTILLES, IS TO ESCORT THE PRINCESS BACK TO EIATTU.
WITH THE RETURN OF THE PRINCESS, PERHAPS THE BICKERING BETWEEN THE PRIMS AND THE PLB CAN BE PUT TO AN END.


THE ALLIANCE AND THE GRAND DUKE HAVE COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING ON THIS MATTER. THE ALLIANCE WOULD BENEFIT GREATLY WITH EIATTU UNITED. ALL WE ASK OF YOU AND YOUR TEAM IS TO HELP BRING IT ABOUT.
WE SERVE THE ALLIANCE, BUT WHY US? SURELY, ALLIANCE NEGOTIATORS WOULD BE BETTER SUITED TO THIS.

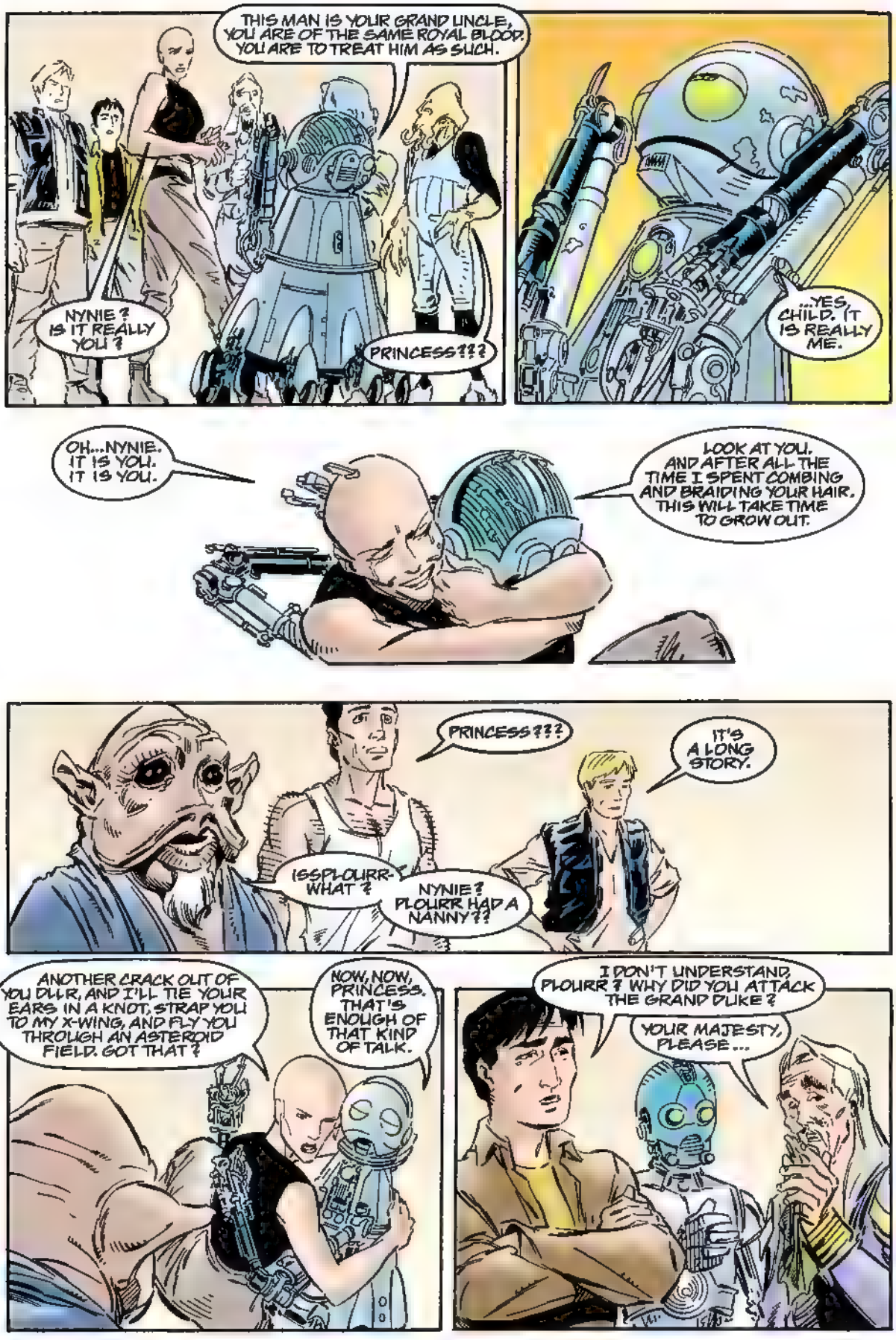

POE WILL BE YOUR DIPLOMATIC LIAISON TO THE PEOPLE OF EIATTU.
I AM YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT.

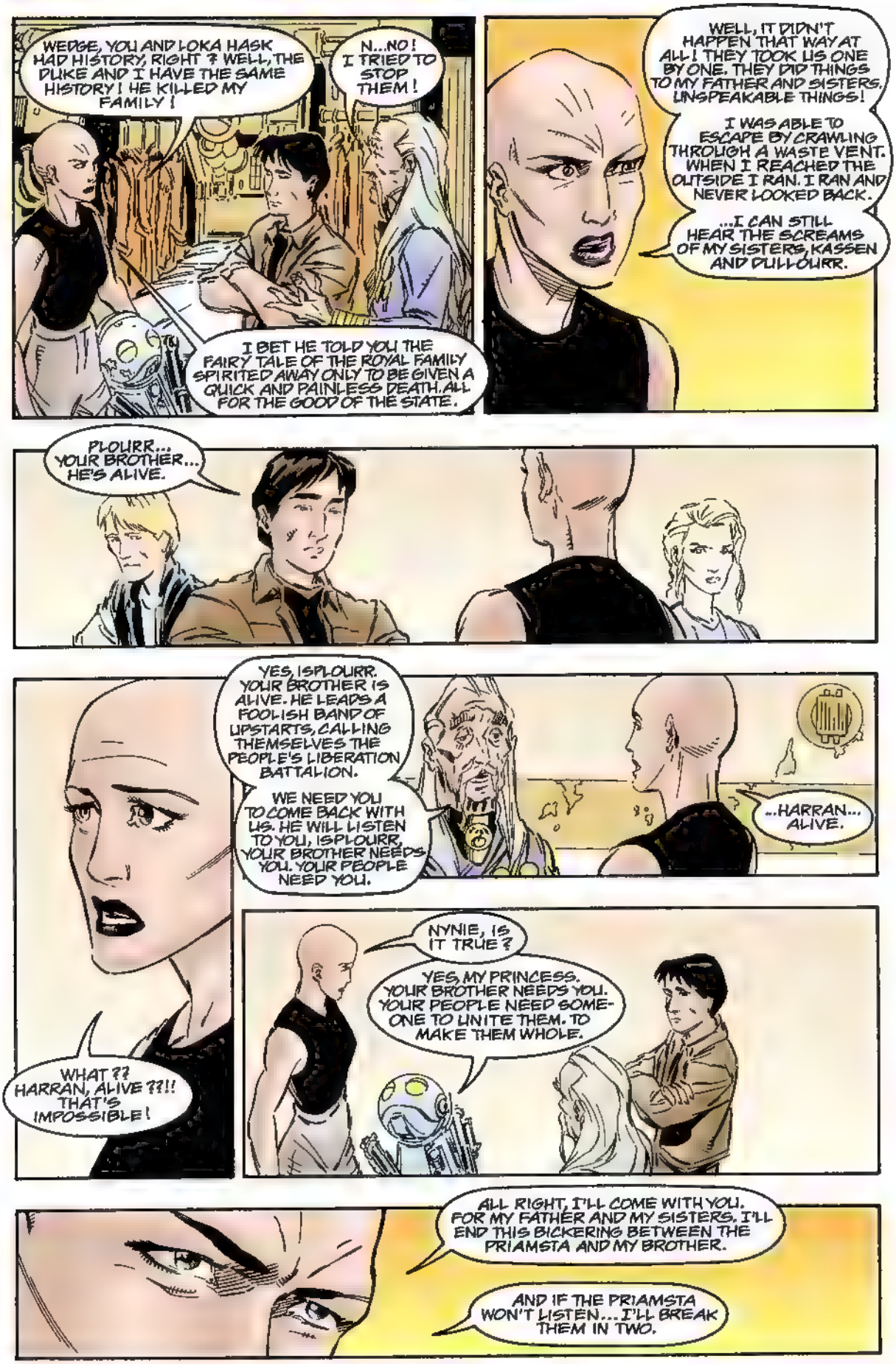

THIS SEEMS TO BE A STRAIGHT MISSION. WHERE CAN WE FIND THE PRINCESS?
NOT TO WORRY, SHE IS CLOSE BY.
9-A9, IF YOU PLEASE.
IN FACT, YOU'VE ALREADY MET.

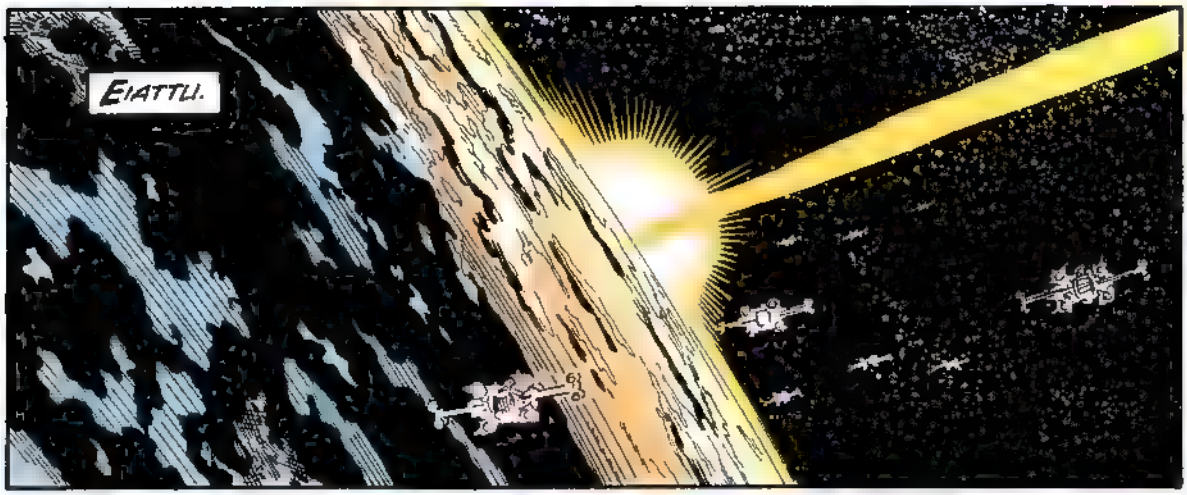
SITHSPAWN! I'D NEVER HAVE GUESSED.
NOR I. IF YOU'LL FOLLOW ME, GENTLEMEN.

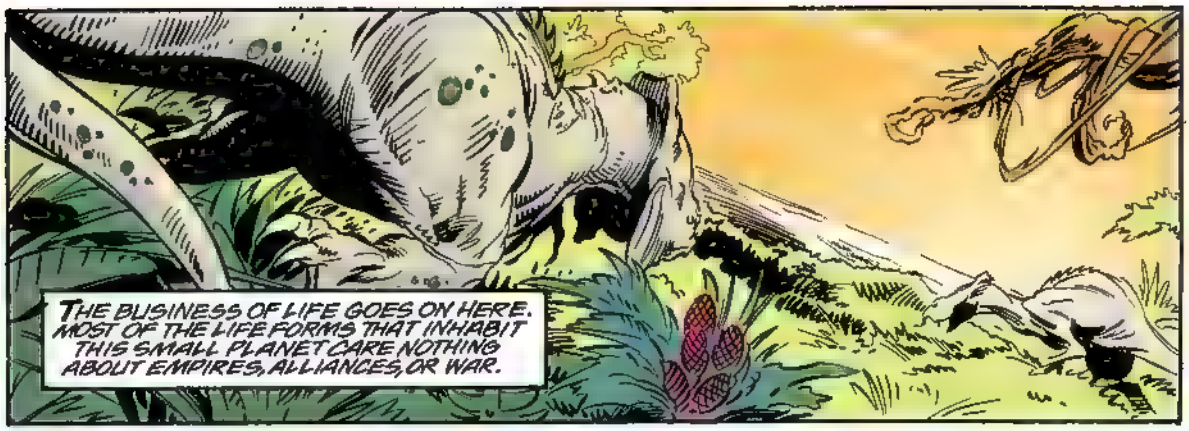

SHE HAS A POINT, NRIN, THE X-WING IS A DATED SHIP.
DAMN RIGHT I HAVE A POINT! THE X-WING IS OBSOLETE! THE B-WING IS THE FUTURE OF SPACE COMBAT.
I'LL NOT HEAR ANY MORE OF THESE FOUL SLANDERS AGAINST A GALLANT SHIP THAT HAS DISTINGUISHED ITSELF IN BATTLE AFTER BATTLE!
OR HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT IT WAS AN X-WING THAT DESTROYED THE FIRST DEATH STAR SINGLE-HANDED! OBSOLETE, INDEED!
OH, DON'T BE SO MELODRAMATIC! SURE AN X-WING DESTROYED THE DEATH STAR, BUT THAT X-WING HAD A GREAT PILOT AT THE CONTROLS, WITH THE FORCE AS HIS CO-PILOT.
IF THE X-WING DIDN'T HAVE THAT BLIND SPOT AT THE REAR OF ITS BELLY, OUR OWN CAPTAIN MIGHT HAVE TAKEN OUT THE DEATH STAR! THE B-WING HAS NO BLIND SPOT!
WOW, LOOK AT 'EM GO AT IT.
YEAH, THEY'RE EITHER GOING TO KILL EACH OTHER, OR TAKE THE UNION VOW.
RIDICULOUS! UTTER NONSENSE! THE X-WING INDEED. SILLY LOOKING THING!
HA! THE B-WING'S AS OLD AS MYNOCK DROPPINGS! AND JUST A LITTLE MORE USEFUL!
I GIVE IT A WEEK BEFORE--
--EXCUSE ME, FEYLIS.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
PRINCESS ISPLOURRDACARTHA ESTILLO, YOUR PRESENCE STRENGTHENS AN OLD MAN'S HEART.
I CAN FIX THAT.

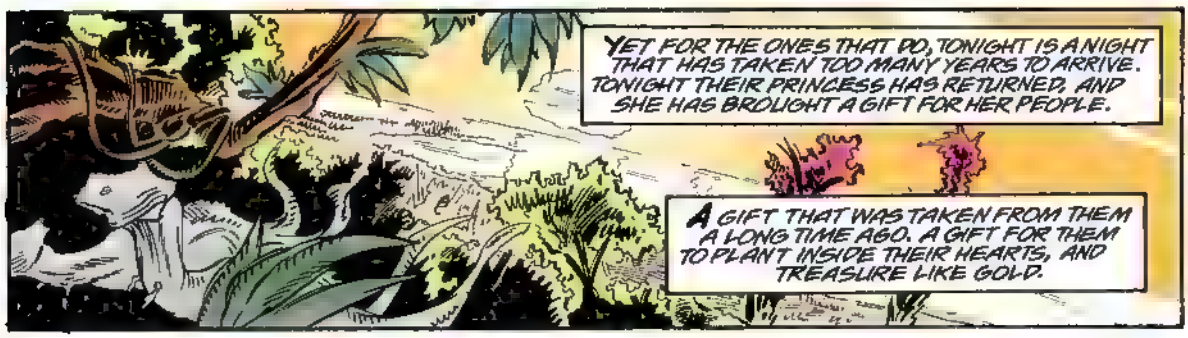
COME TO FINISH WHAT YOU STARTED YEARS AGO, YOU MURDERING BASTARD!
CAPTAIN ANTILLES! STOP HER!
HEY, PLOURR, CALM DOWN!
...NO... MY DEAR PRINCESS.
ALL RIGHT EVERYBODY, SETTLE DOWN! NRIN, IBTISAM! HELP THE DUKE TO HIS FEET!
YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND, MY PRINCESS.
I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU KILLED MY FAMILY!
HE WHAT?
STAND DOWN, PLOURR! THAT'S AN ORDER!
PRINCESS, PLEASE...
STOP CALLING ME THAT!
IS PLOURRDACARTHA! I DID NOT RAISE YOU TO SPEAK SO!
...NYNIE?!...

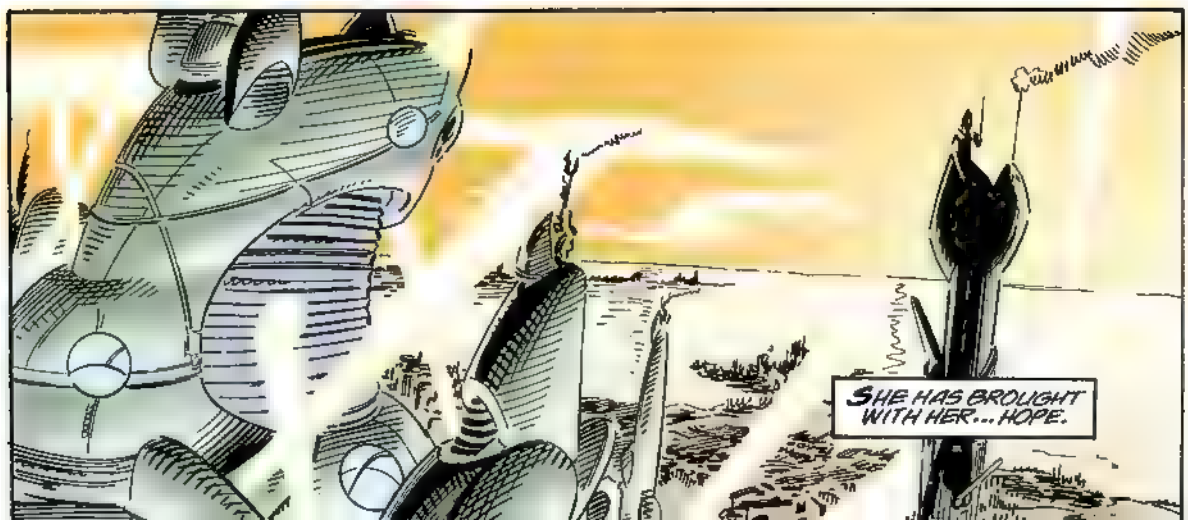

THIS MAN IS YOUR GRAND UNCLE. YOU ARE OF THE SAME ROYAL BLOOD. YOU ARE TO TREAT HIM AS SUCH.
NYNIE? IS IT REALLY YOU?
PRINCESS???
...YES, CHILD. IT IS REALLY ME.
OH...NYNIE. IT IS YOU. IT IS YOU.
LOOK AT YOU. AND AFTER ALL THE TIME I SPENT COMBING AND BRAIDING YOUR HAIR. THIS WILL TAKE TIME TO GROW OUT.
PRINCESS???
IT'S A LONG STORY.
ISSPLOURR-? WHAT?
NYNIE? PLOURR HAD A NANNY??
ANOTHER CRACK OUT OF YOU DLLR, AND I'LL TIE YOUR EARS IN A KNOT, STRAP YOU TO MY X-WING, AND FLY YOU THROUGH AN ASTEROID FIELD. GOT THAT?
NOW, NOW, PRINCESS. THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT KIND OF TALK.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND, PLOURR? WHY DID YOU ATTACK THE GRAND DUKE?
YOUR MAJESTY, PLEASE...

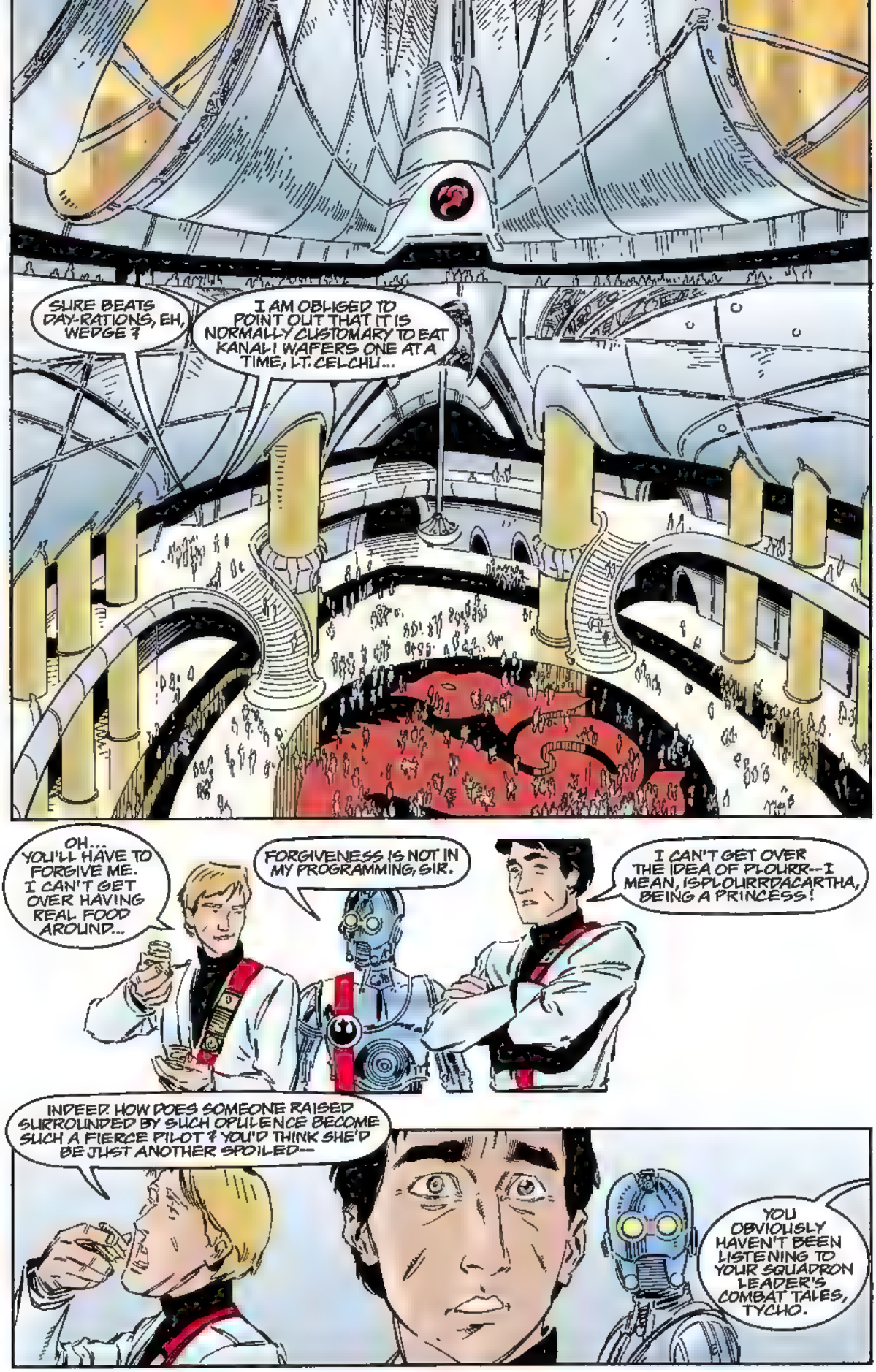

WEDGE, YOU AND LOKA HASK HAD HISTORY, RIGHT? WELL, THE DUKE AND I HAVE THE SAME HISTORY! HE KILLED MY FAMILY!
N...NO! I TRIED TO STOP THEM!
I BET HE TOLD YOU THE FAIRY TALE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY SPIRITED AWAY ONLY TO BE GIVEN A QUICK AND PAINLESS DEATH. ALL FOR THE GOOD OF THE STATE.
WELL, IT DIDN'T HAPPEN THAT WAY AT ALL! THEY TOOK US ONE BY ONE. THEY DID THINGS TO MY FATHER AND SISTERS, UNSPEAKABLE THINGS!
I WAS ABLE TO ESCAPE BY CRAWLING THROUGH A WASTE VENT. WHEN I REACHED THE OUTSIDE I RAN. I RAN AND NEVER LOOKED BACK.
...I CAN STILL HEAR THE SCREAMS OF MY SISTERS, KASSEN AND DULLOURR.
PLOURR... YOUR BROTHER... HE'S ALIVE.
YES, ISPLOURR. YOUR BROTHER IS ALIVE. HE LEADS A FOOLISH BAND OF UPSTARTS, CALLING THEMSELVES THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION BATTALION.
WE NEED YOU TO COME BACK WITH US. HE WILL LISTEN TO YOU, ISPLOURR, YOUR BROTHER NEEDS YOU. YOUR PEOPLE NEED YOU.
...HARRAN... ALIVE.
WHAT?? HARRAN, ALIVE??!! THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
NYNIE, IS IT TRUE?
YES, MY PRINCESS. YOUR BROTHER NEEDS YOU. YOUR PEOPLE NEED SOMEONE TO UNITE THEM. TO MAKE THEM WHOLE.
ALL RIGHT, I'LL COME WITH YOU. FOR MY FATHER AND MY SISTERS. I'LL END THIS BICKERING BETWEEN THE PRIAMSTA AND MY BROTHER.
AND IF THE PRIAMSTA WON'T LISTEN... I'LL BREAK THEM IN TWO.


EIATTU.

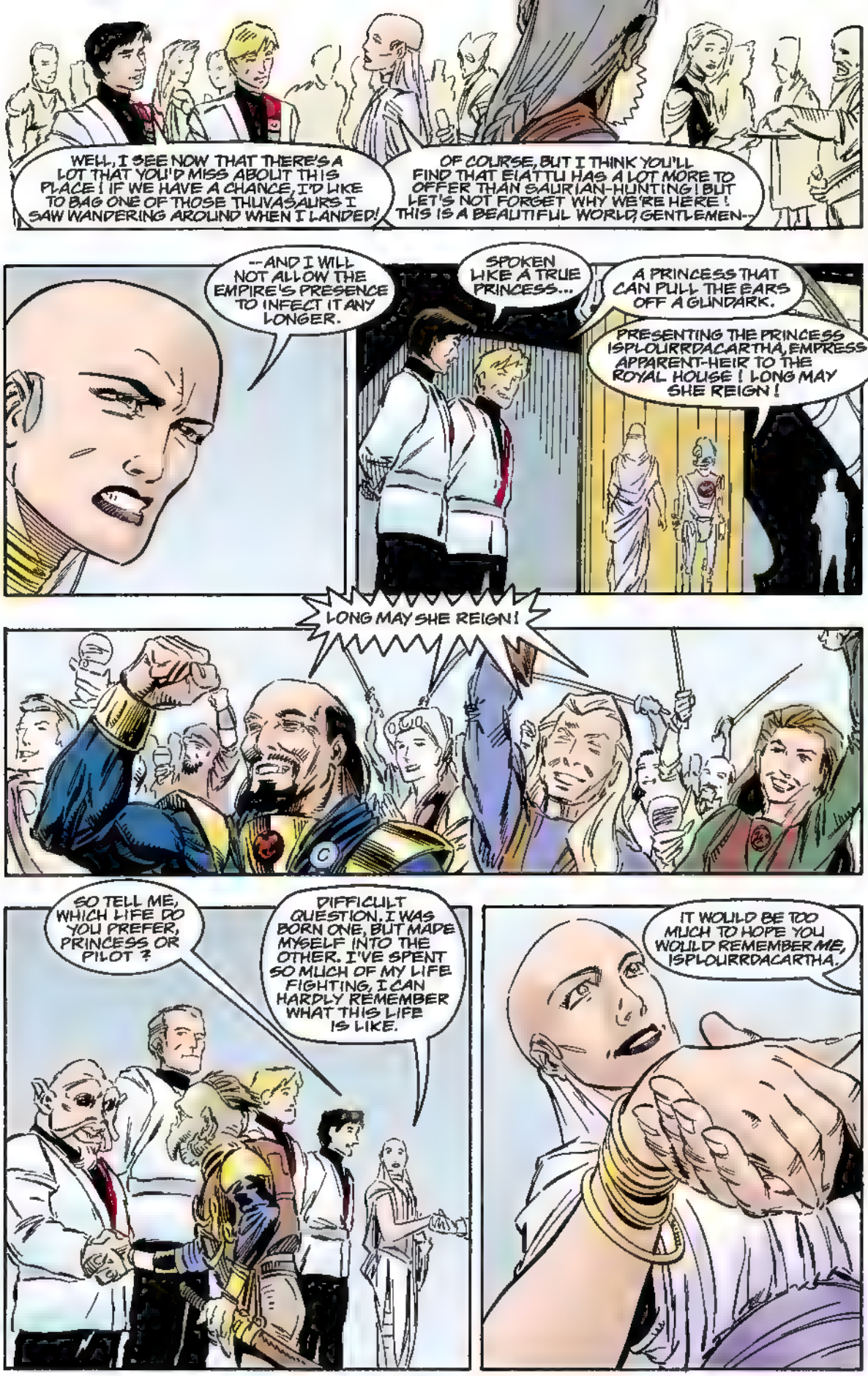

THE BUSINESS OF LIFE GOES ON HERE. MOST OF THE LIFE FORMS THAT INHABIT THIS SMALL PLANET CARE NOTHING ABOUT EMPIRES, ALLIANCES, OR WAR.

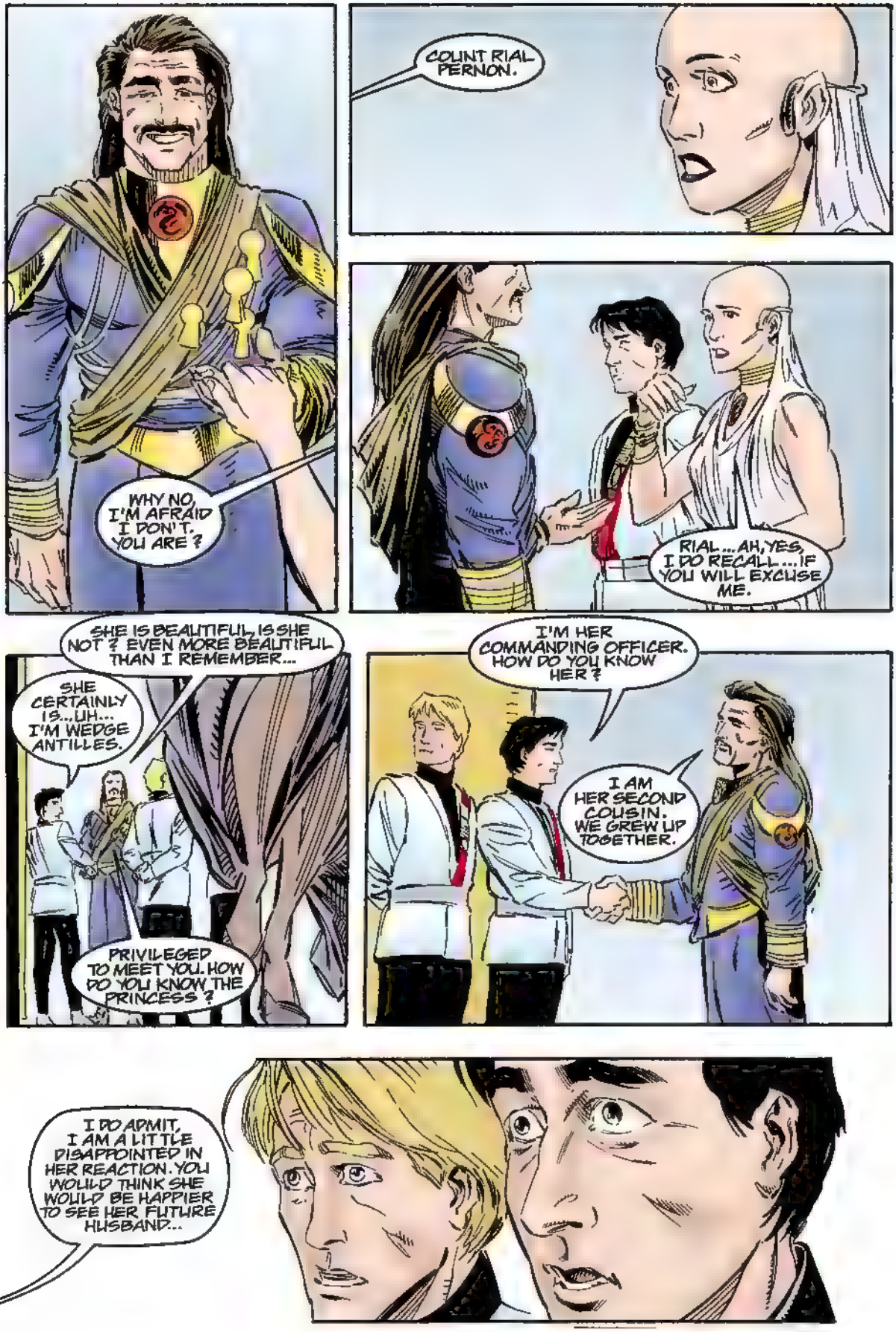

YET FOR THE ONES THAT DO, TONIGHT IS A NIGHT THAT HAS TAKEN TOO MANY YEARS TO ARRIVE. TONIGHT THEIR PRINCESS HAS RETURNED, AND SHE HAS BROUGHT A GIFT FOR HER PEOPLE.
A GIFT THAT WAS TAKEN FROM THEM A LONG TIME AGO. A GIFT FOR THEM TO PLANT INSIDE THEIR HEARTS, AND TREASURE LIKE GOLD.

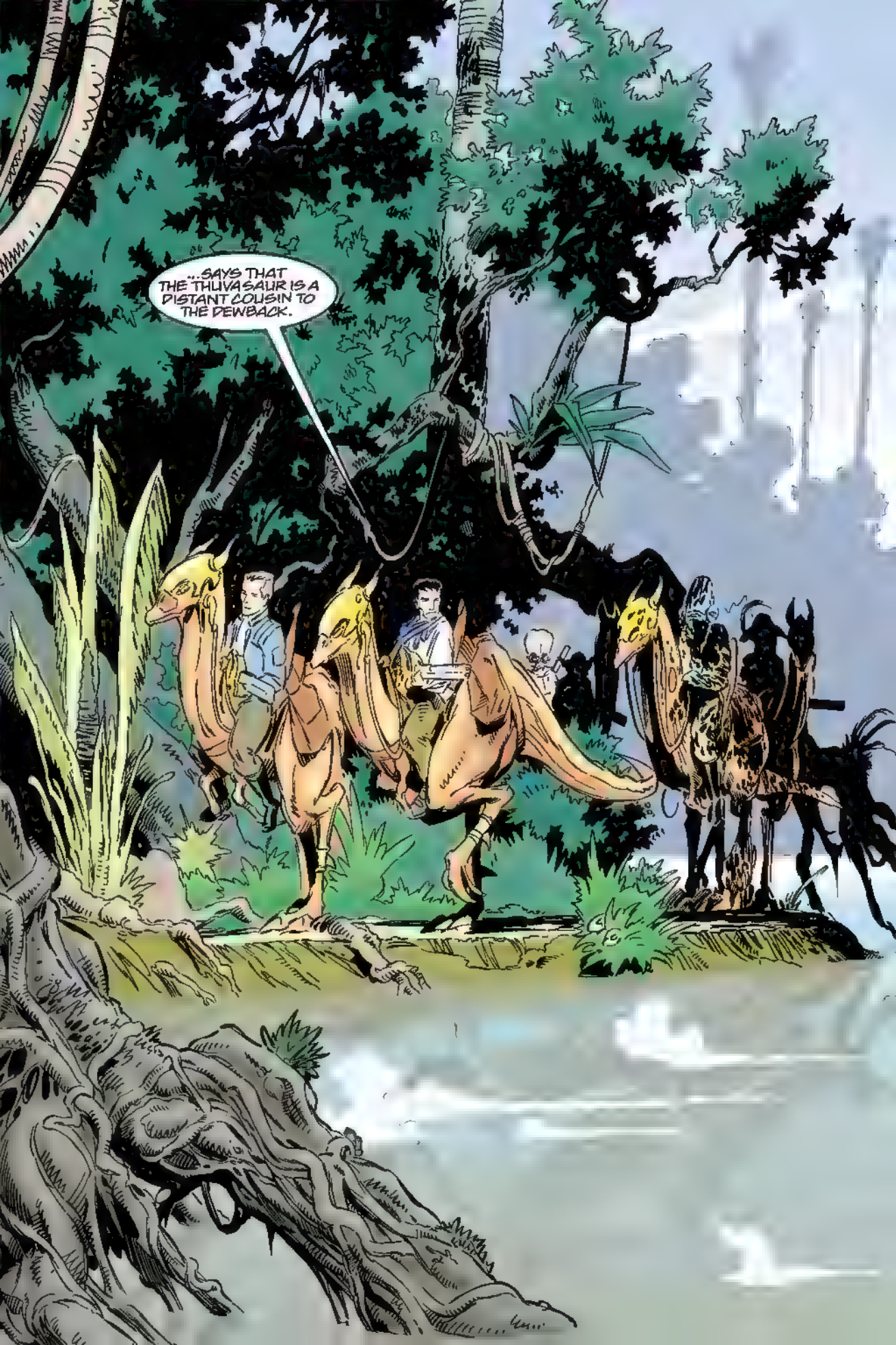

SHE HAS BROUGHT WITH HER... HOPE.

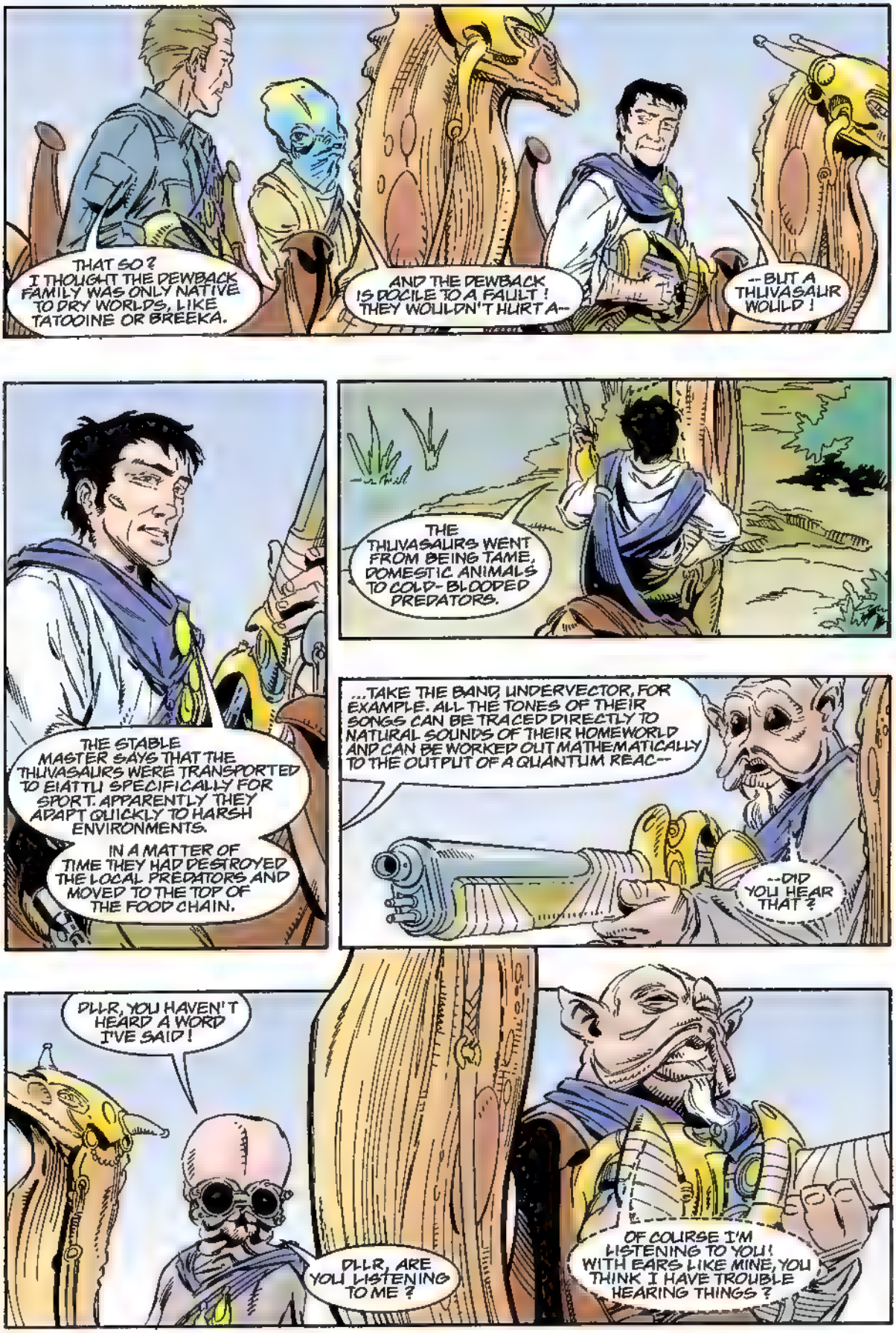

SURE BEATS DAY-RATIONS, EH, WEDGE?
I AM OBLIGED TO POINT OUT THAT IT IS NORMALLY CUSTOMARY TO EAT KANALI WAFERS ONE AT A TIME, LT. CELCHU...
OH... YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE ME. I CAN'T GET OVER HAVING REAL FOOD AROUND...
FORGIVENESS IS NOT IN MY PROGRAMMING, SIR.
I CAN'T GET OVER THE IDEA OF PLOURR--I MEAN, ISPLOURRDACARTHA, BEING A PRINCESS!
INDEED. HOW DOES SOMEONE RAISED SURROUNDED BY SUCH OPULENCE BECOME SUCH A FIERCE PILOT? YOU'D THINK SHE'D BE JUST ANOTHER SPOILED--
YOU OBVIOUSLY HAVEN'T BEEN LISTENING TO YOUR SQUADRON LEADER'S COMBAT TALES, TYCHO.

IF YOU HAD, YOU'D KNOW THAT PRINCESSES HAVE FOUGHT FOR THE ALLIANCE LONG BEFORE EITHER ONE OF US.
WOW, PLOURR... YOU LOOK TREMENDOUS !!
THANKS, BUT DON'T LET THIS OUTFIT FOOL YOU! I COULD STILL VAPE YOU OUT OF THE AIR WITH MY EYES CLOSED!
ALL THAT ASIDE, I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE ENJOYING OUR LOCAL CUISINE. OF ALL THE THINGS I MISSED MOST ABOUT MY HOMEWORLD, IT MIGHT BE OUR PALACE CHEF-DROIDS.


WELL, I SEE NOW THAT THERE'S A LOT THAT YOU'D MISS ABOUT THIS PLACE! IF WE HAVE A CHANCE, I'D LIKE TO BAG ONE OF THOSE THUVASAURS I SAW WANDERING AROUND WHEN I LANDED!
OF COURSE, BUT I THINK YOU'LL FIND THAT EIATTU HAS A LOT MORE TO OFFER THAN SAURIAN-HUNTING! BUT LET'S NOT FORGET WHY WE'RE HERE! THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL WORLD, GENTLEMEN--
--AND I WILL NOT ALLOW THE EMPIRE'S PRESENCE TO INFECT IT ANY LONGER.
SPOKEN LIKE A TRUE PRINCESS...
A PRINCESS THAT CAN PULL THE EARS OFF A GLINDARK.
PRESENTING THE PRINCESS ISPLOURRDACARTHA, EMPRESS APPARENT-HEIR TO THE ROYAL HOUSE! LONG MAY SHE REIGN!
LONG MAY SHE REIGN!
SO TELL ME, WHICH LIFE DO YOU PREFER, PRINCESS OR PILOT?
DIFFICULT QUESTION. I WAS BORN ONE, BUT MADE MYSELF INTO THE OTHER. I'VE SPENT SO MUCH OF MY LIFE FIGHTING, I CAN HARDLY REMEMBER WHAT THIS LIFE IS LIKE.
IT WOULD BE TOO MUCH TO HOPE YOU WOULD REMEMBER ME, ISPLOURRDACARTHA.

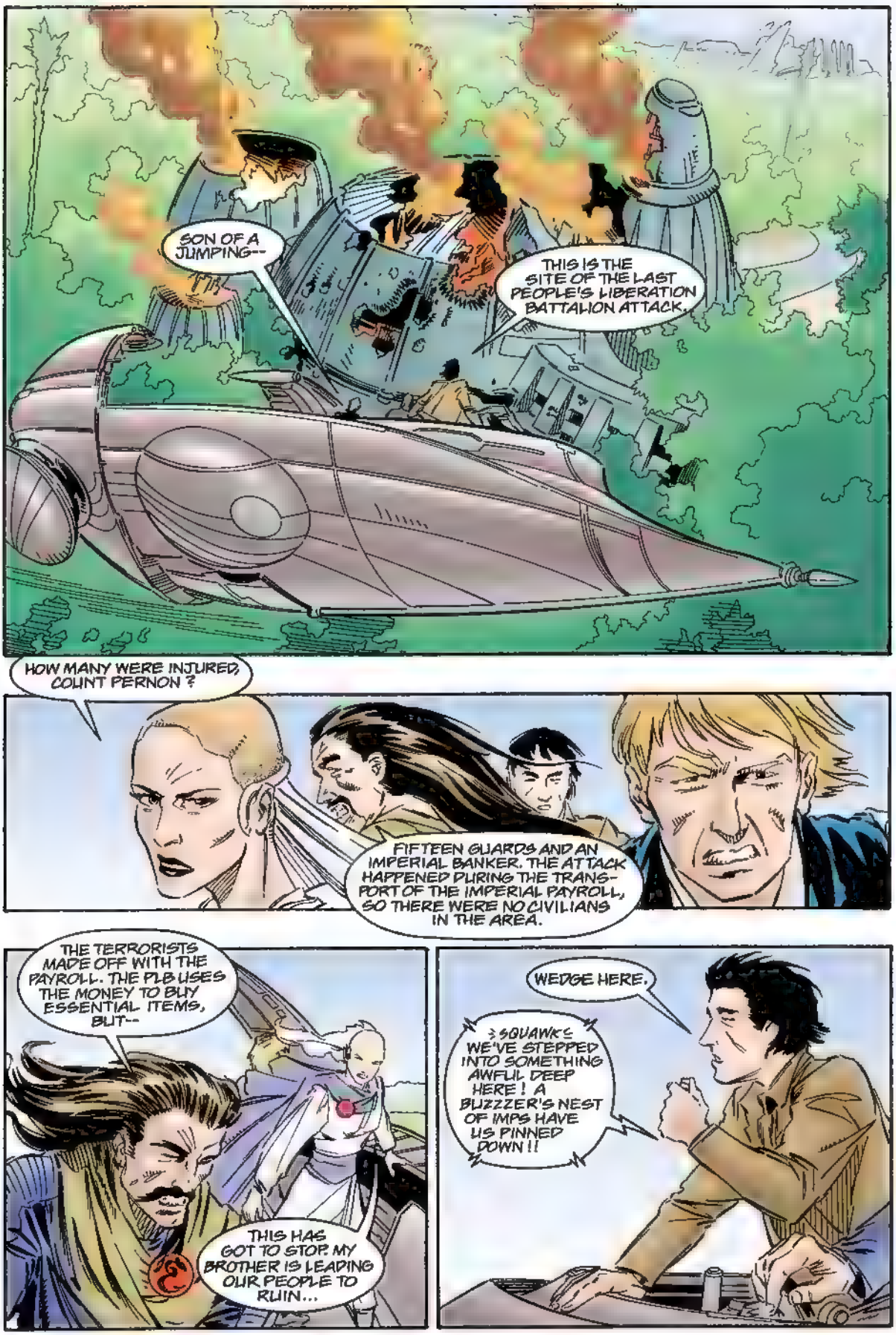

WHY NO, I'M AFRAID I DON'T. YOU ARE?
COUNT RIAL PERNON.
RIAL... AH, YES, I DO RECALL... IF YOU WILL EXCUSE ME.
SHE IS BEAUTIFUL, IS SHE NOT? EVEN MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN I REMEMBER...
SHE CERTAINLY IS... UH... I'M WEDGE ANTILLES.
PRIVILEGED TO MEET YOU. HOW DO YOU KNOW THE PRINCESS?
I'M HER COMMANDING OFFICER. HOW DO YOU KNOW HER?
I AM HER SECOND COUSIN. WE GREW UP TOGETHER.
I DO ADMIT, I AM A LITTLE DISAPPOINTED IN HER REACTION. YOU WOULD THINK SHE WOULD BE HAPPIER TO SEE HER FUTURE HUSBAND...

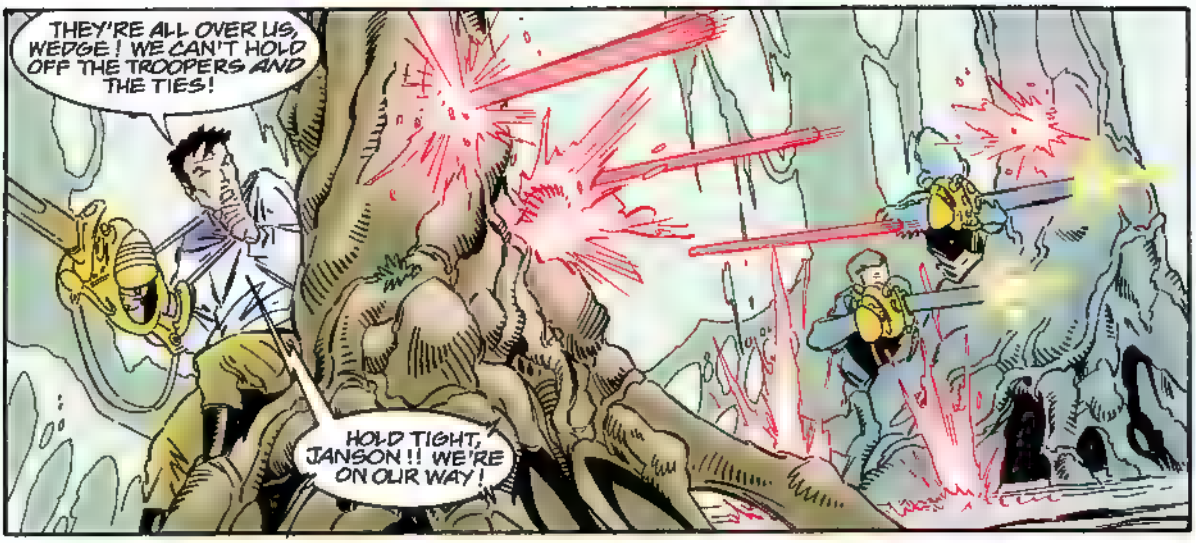

...SAYS THAT THE THUVASAUR IS A DISTANT COUSIN TO THE DEWBACK.

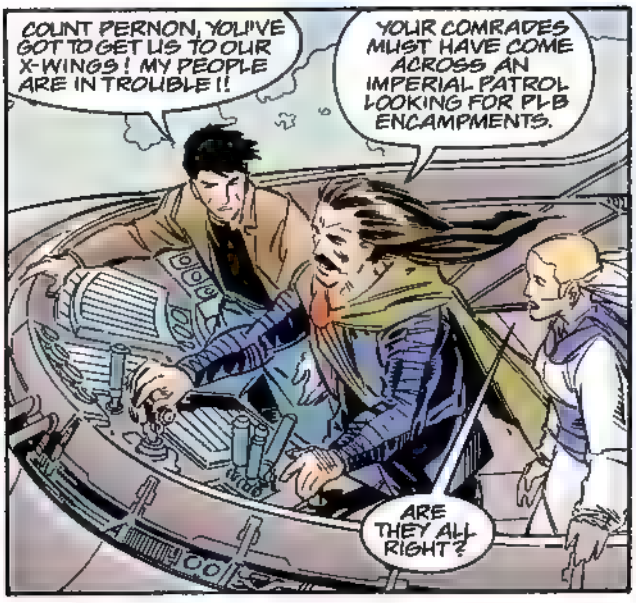

THAT SO? I THOUGHT THE DEWBACK FAMILY WAS ONLY NATIVE TO DRY WORLDS, LIKE TATOOINE OR BREEKA.
AND THE DEWBACK IS DOCILE TO A FAULT! THEY WOULDN'T HURT A--
--BUT A THLIVASAUR WOULD!
THE STABLE MASTER SAYS THAT THE THLIVASAURS WERE TRANSPORTED TO EIATTU SPECIFICALLY FOR SPORT. APPARENTLY THEY ADAPT QUICKLY TO HARSH ENVIRONMENTS.
IN A MATTER OF TIME THEY HAD DESTROYED THE LOCAL PREDATORS AND MOVED TO THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN.
THE THLIVASAURS WENT FROM BEING TAME, DOMESTIC ANIMALS TO COLD-BLOODED PREDATORS.
...TAKE THE BAND, UNDERVECTOR, FOR EXAMPLE. ALL THE TONES OF THEIR SONGS CAN BE TRACED DIRECTLY TO NATURAL SOUNDS OF THEIR HOMEWORLD AND CAN BE WORKED OUT MATHEMATICALLY TO THE OUTPUT OF A QUANTUM REAC--
--DID YOU HEAR THAT?
DLLR, YOU HAVEN'T HEARD A WORD I'VE SAID!
DLLR, ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?
OF COURSE I'M LISTENING TO YOU! WITH EARS LIKE MINE, YOU THINK I HAVE TROUBLE HEARING THINGS?

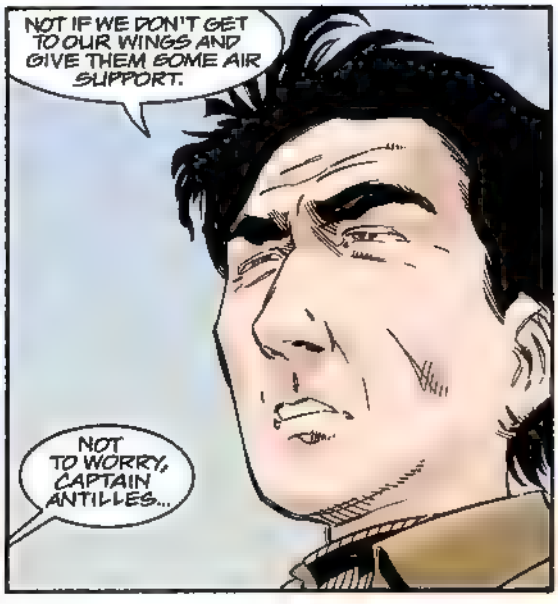
DLLR, WHAT'S THE MATTER? WHY ARE YOU SO JUMPY?
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THOSE THUVASAURS CAN DO? WE WALK INTO THIS FORCE-FORSAKEN SWAMP WITH NO GUIDE AND NO TRACKING DEVICES, AND YOU ASK ME WHY I'M SO JUMPY?
BESIDES, I KEEP HEARING SOMETHING JUST OUT OF EARSHOT AND I CAN'T MAKE IT OUT.
AND AS FOR UNDERVECTOR'S MUSIC, THEY STINK LIKE TAUNTAUN DROPPINGS!
CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? PLOURR A PRINCESS, AND NOT ONE OF HER CREWMATES SUSPECTED!
I SAW THE NOBILITY IN HER EYES FROM THE MOMENT I MET HER.
SUCH TRAGEDY IN PLOURR'S LIFE. HER FAMILY KILLED, A LIFE ON THE RUN IN FEAR OF SOMEONE DISCOVERING HER TRUE IDENTITY. AND NOW--
UMM, NRIN? WHY ARE YOU WEARING THAT HAT?
IT'S PART OF THE TRADITIONAL HUNTING UNIFORM OF THE EIATTU NOBLES. THEY'VE WORN IT FOR GENERATIONS...
...BUT HOW THEY ARE ABLE TO HUNT WEARING THIS DAMNED FEATHER, I'LL NEVER KNOW.

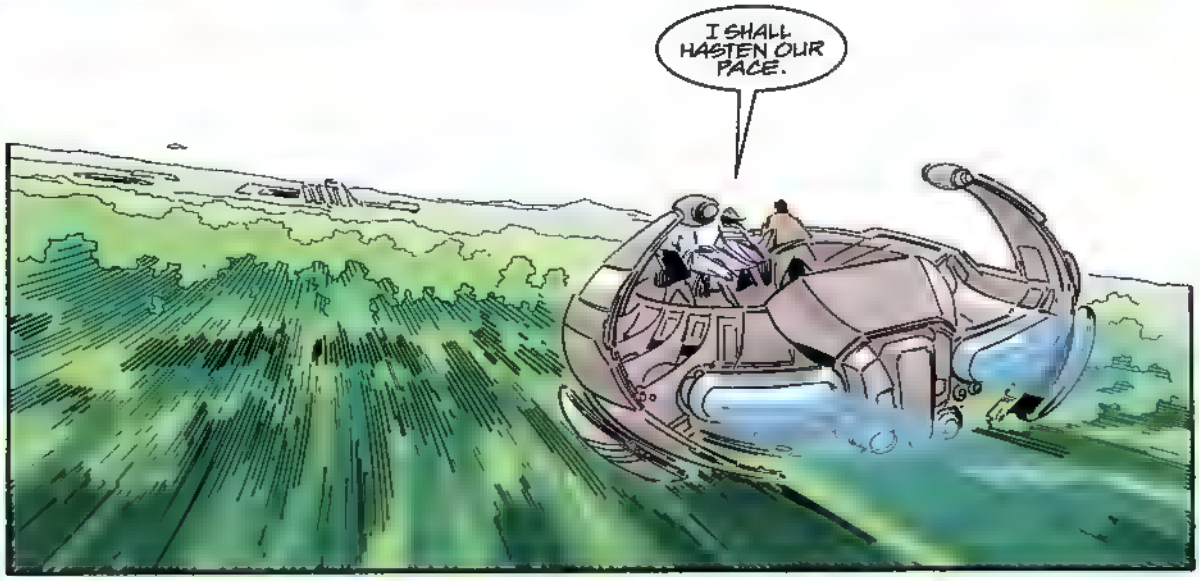
FROM WHAT WEDGE TELLS ME, COUNT PERNON AND PLOURR WERE BETROTHED WHEN THEY WERE CHILDREN.
IN THE EYES OF THE STATE THEY'RE MARRIED, BUT PLOURR DOESN'T QUITE SEE IT THAT WAY.
YOU GOT THAT RIGHT.
WITH ALL THAT'S HAPPENED, THE FIGHTING WITH THE NOBLES, HER BROTHER HARRAN LEADING THE PLB...I THINK THE LAST THING PLOURR NEEDS IS A HUSBAND. EVEN IF HE IS A COUNT.
IF I KNOW PLOURR, SHE CAN HANDLE IT... EVEN IF SHE NEEDS TO KICK A LITTLE--
HEY, JANSON!!!
THERE'S SOMETHING GOING ON IN THERE. I'M HEARING SOME STRANGE STUFF...
I THOUGHT THE STABLE KEEPER TOLD YOU THUVASAURS DIDN'T LIKE THE DEEPER SWAMPS...
MAYBE IT'S SOMETHING ELSE. I--
YOU HEAR THAT?
WHATTA YA' GOT, DLLR?
BLASTER FIRE... AND IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, BLASTER FIRE WITH AN IMP RING TO IT.
LET'S CHECK IT OUT.
MAY NOT BE AS GOOD AS A THUVASAUR PELT, BUT AN IMP HIDE'LL DO.


SON OF A JUMPING--
THIS IS THE SITE OF THE LAST PEOPLE'S LIBERATION BATTALION ATTACK.
HOW MANY WERE INJURED, COUNT PERNON ?
FIFTEEN GUARDS AND AN IMPERIAL BANKER. THE ATTACK HAPPENED DURING THE TRANSPORT OF THE IMPERIAL PAYROLL, SO THERE WERE NO CIVILIANS IN THE AREA.
THE TERRORISTS MADE OFF WITH THE PAYROLL. THE PLB USES THE MONEY TO BUY ESSENTIAL ITEMS, BUT--
THIS HAS GOT TO STOP. MY BROTHER IS LEADING OUR PEOPLE TO RUIN...
WEDGE HERE.
>SQUAWK< WE'VE STEPPED INTO SOMETHING AWFUL DEEP HERE ! A BUZZZER'S NEST OF IMPS HAVE US PINNED DOWN !!


THEY'RE ALL OVER US, WEDGE! WE CAN'T HOLD OFF THE TROOPERS AND THE TIES!
HOLD TIGHT, JANSON!! WE'RE ON OUR WAY!

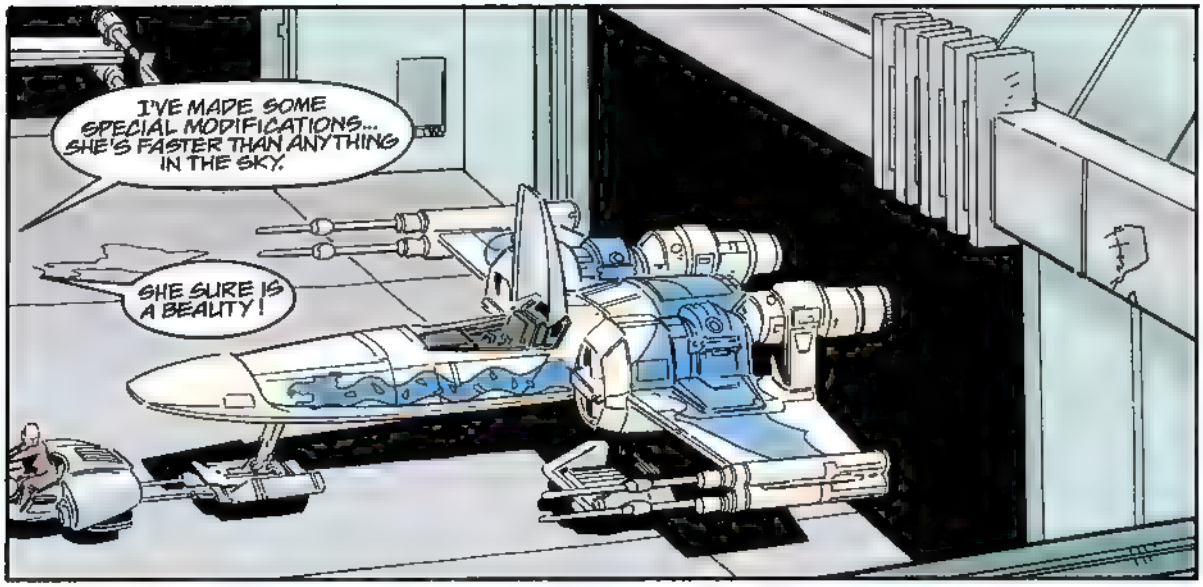

COUNT PERNON, YOU'VE GOT TO GET US TO OUR X-WINGS! MY PEOPLE ARE IN TROUBLE!!
YOUR COMRADES MUST HAVE COME ACROSS AN IMPERIAL PATROL LOOKING FOR PLB ENCAMPMENTS.
ARE THEY ALL RIGHT?


NOT IF WE DON'T GET TO OUR WINGS AND GIVE THEM SOME AIR SUPPORT.
NOT TO WORRY, CAPTAIN ANTILLES...

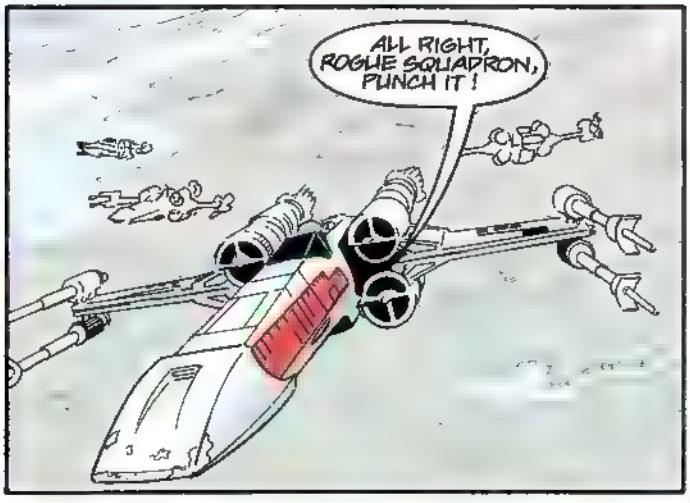

I SHALL HASTEN OUR PACE.

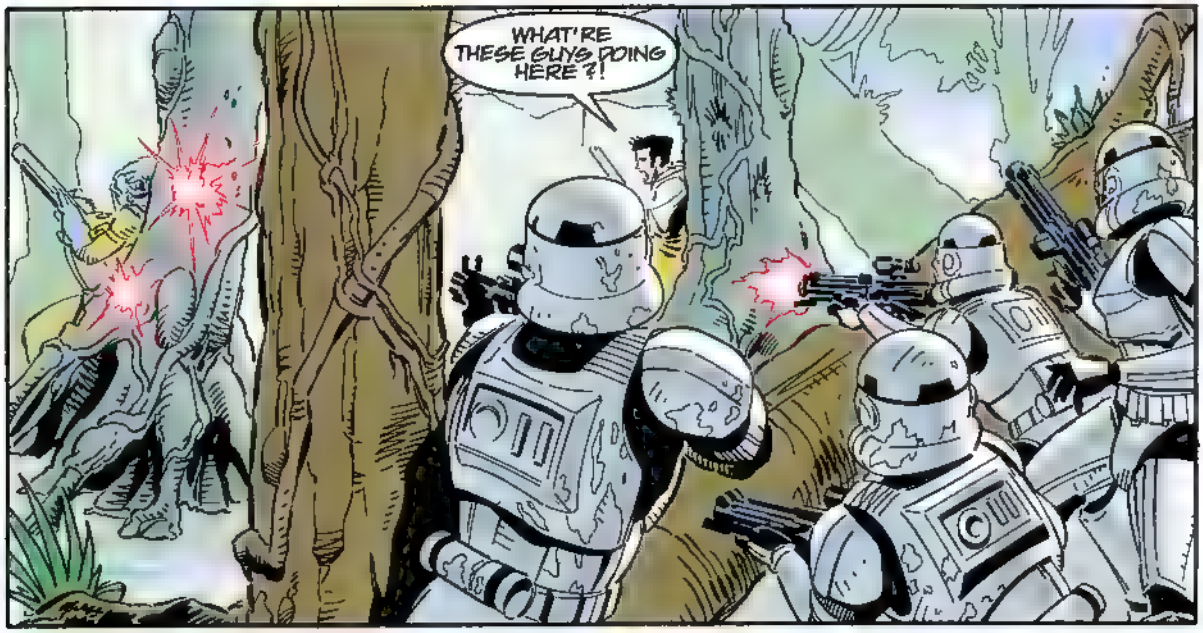
I KNEW IT! I KNEW IT! THESE EARS DON'T LIE! "WHY SO JUMPY", SHE SAYS !!
POOR NOBLE CREATURE, YOU WILL BE AVENGED!!
NRIN! WOULD YOU MIND TOO MUCH TRYING TO CONCENTRATE ON THE LIVING?!
HELP IS ON THE WAY!
GOOD! WE SURE COULD USE SOME OF THAT FAMOUS AIR SUPPORT I'VE ALWAYS HEARD ABOUT!
HOWRRRR!
CHOOM!
CHOOM!
THOOOMM!
THAT WASN'T REALLY WHAT I HAD IN MIND...

MY PRINCESS, I MUST PROTEST--
STOW IT, RIAL! I MAY BE THE PRINCESS OF THE REALM, BUT I'M ALSO A MEMBER OF ROGUE SQUADRON, AND I INTEND TO BLAST SOME IMPS!!
THEN I REQUEST TO JOIN THE ATTACK--
ABSOLUTELY NOT!
SORRY, PLOURR! RIAL FLIES WITH US. YOU MAY BE HIS PRINCESS, BUT I LEAD ROGUE SQUADRON.
WHAT ARE YOU FLYING?
A Z-95 HEADHUNTER.
A Z-95? THOSE THINGS CAN'T KEEP UP WITH AN X-WING! YOU'LL BE A SITTING MYNOCK!!
THEN I GUESS YOU'LL HAVE TO PROTECT ME.
THE Z-95'S A GOOD FIGHTER, COMPARABLE TO ANYTHING WE HAVE. WELCOME ABOARD!

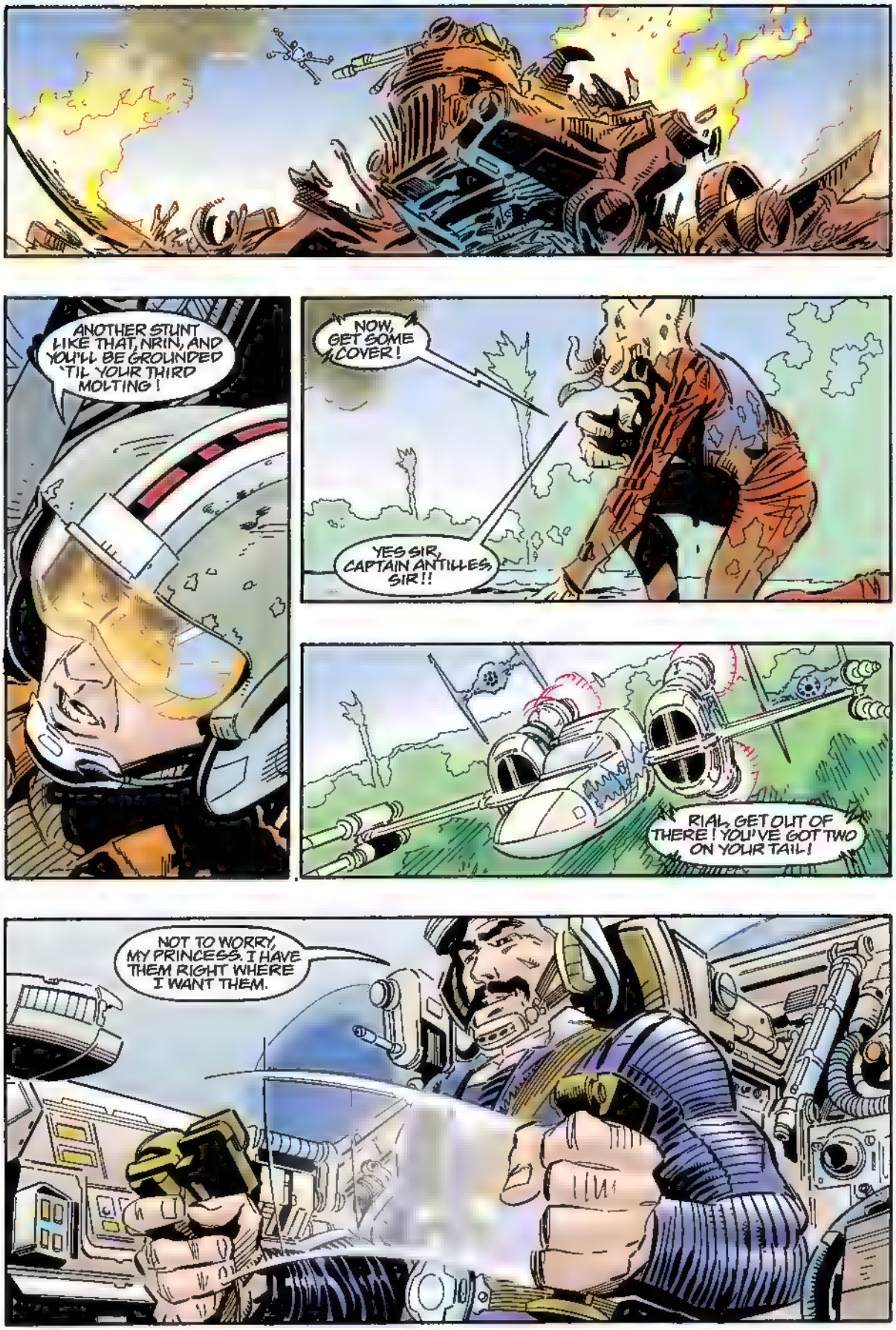

I'VE MADE SOME SPECIAL MODIFICATIONS... SHE'S FASTER THAN ANYTHING IN THE SKY.
SHE SURE IS A BEAUTY!

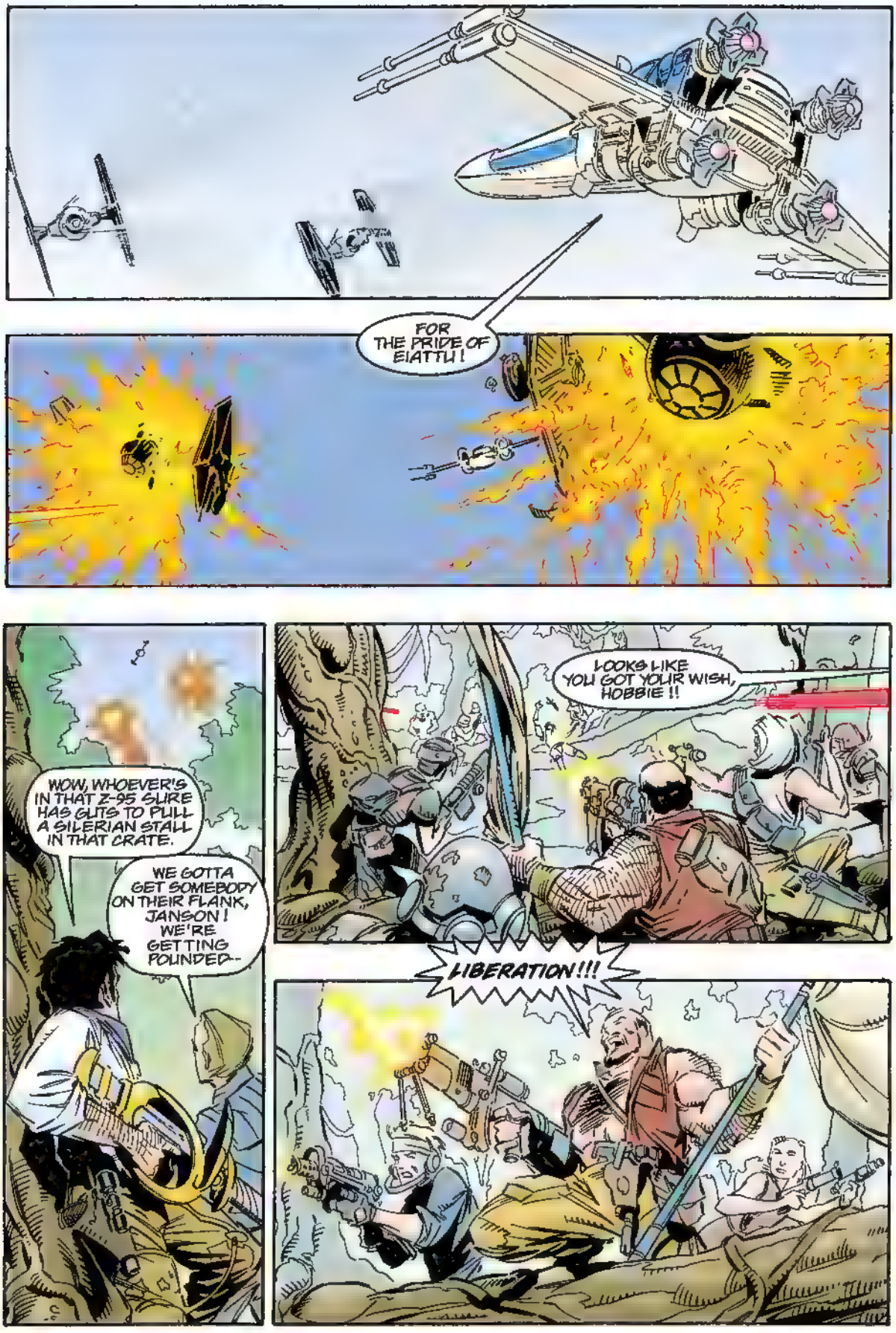
WE FLY A STANDARD DELTA ATTACK PATTERN. JUST TAKE YOUR LEAD FROM PLOURR.

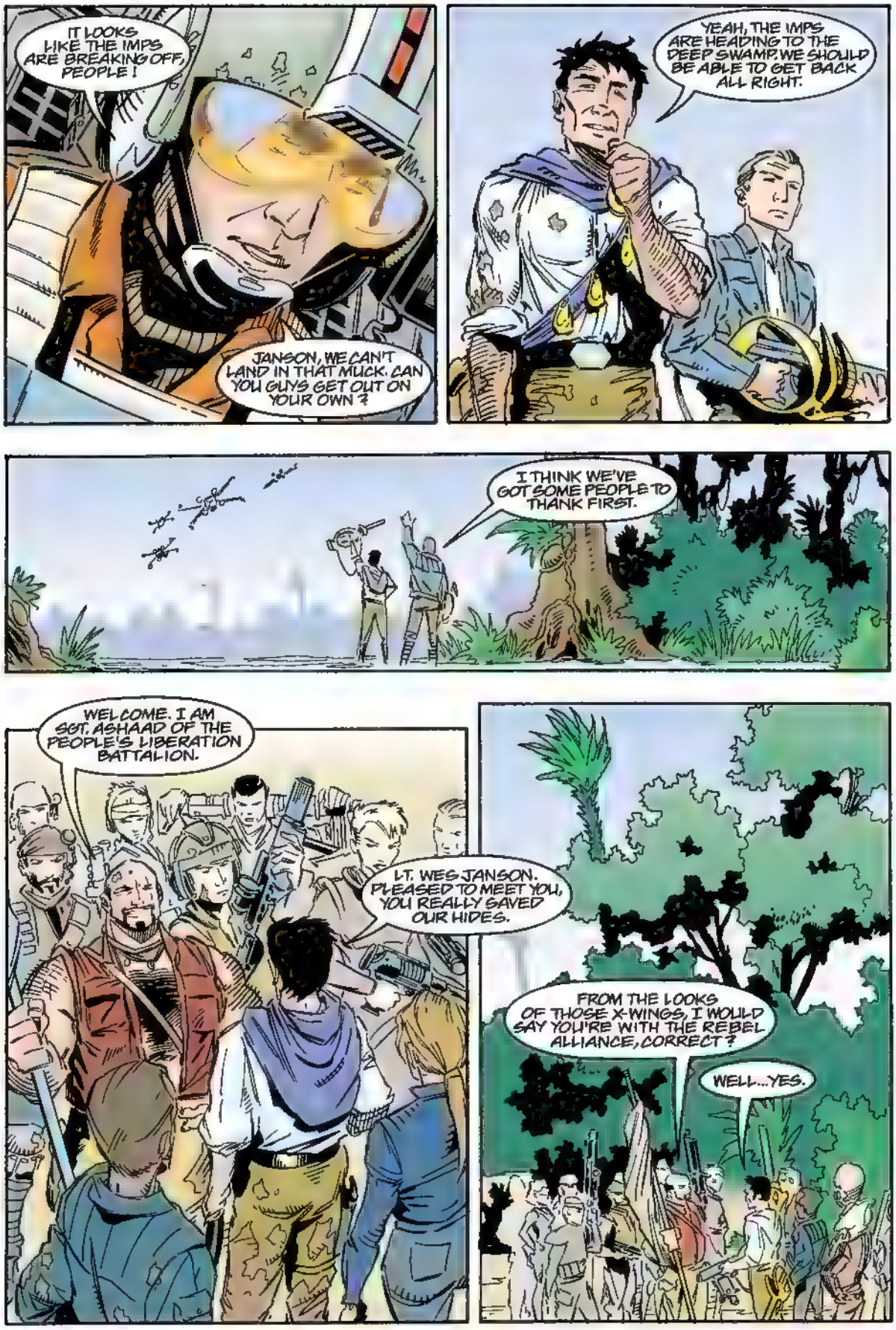

ALL RIGHT, ROGUE SQUADRON, PUNCH IT!


WHAT'RE THESE GUYS DOING HERE?!

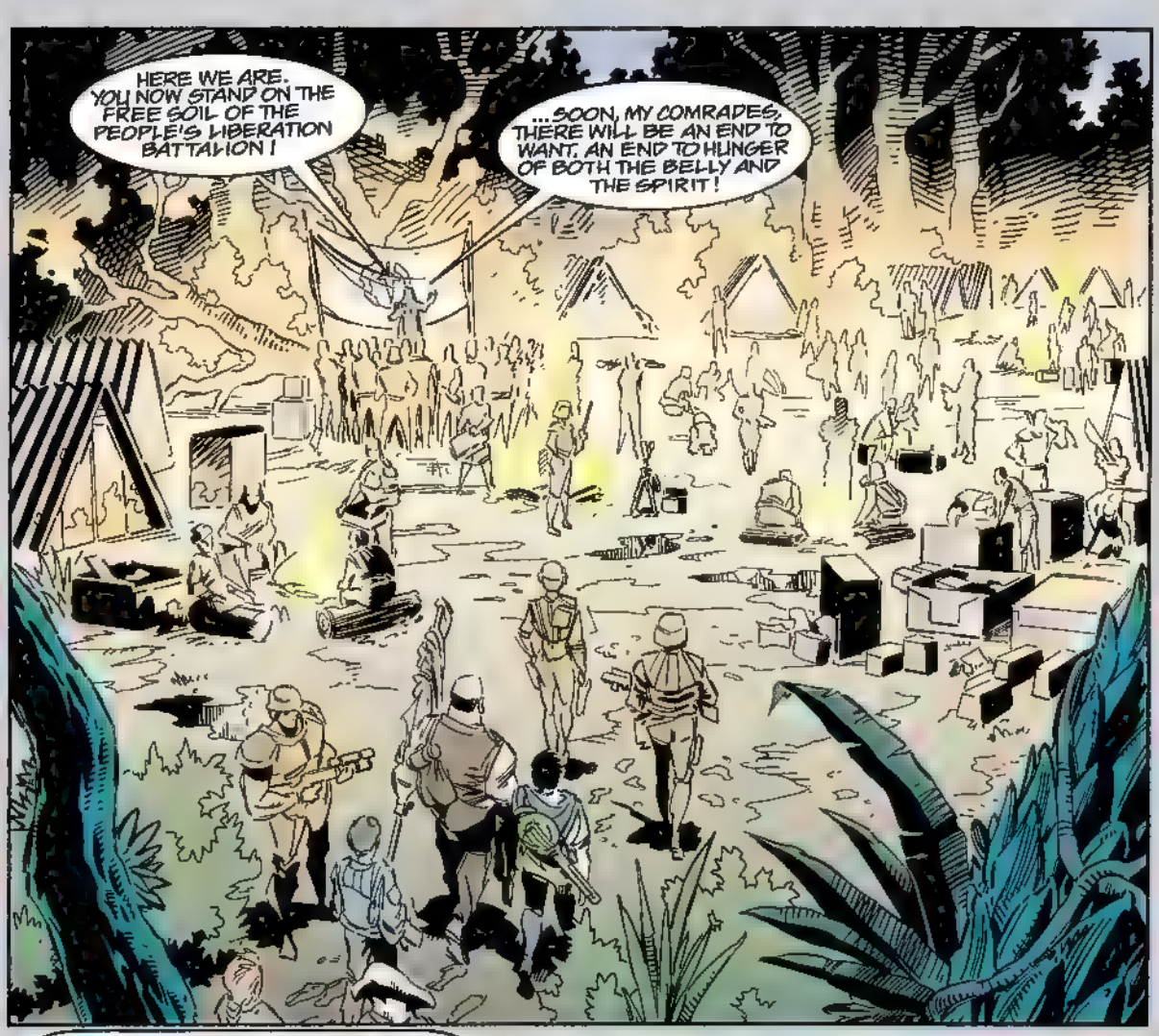
KYYAAAH!
NRIN!
NOW THEY'VE DONE IT!
COME ON, YOU IMP MUDWORMS! TAKE A SHOT AT ME!
NRIN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
NERF-LICE! GARBAGE-HOUNDS!
WHOOOOM!


ANOTHER STUNT LIKE THAT, NRIN, AND YOU'LL BE GROUNDED 'TIL YOUR THIRD MOLTING!
NOW, GET SOME COVER!
YES SIR, CAPTAIN ANTILLES, SIR!!
RIAL, GET OUT OF THERE! YOU'VE GOT TWO ON YOUR TAIL!
NOT TO WORRY, MY PRINCESS. I HAVE THEM RIGHT WHERE I WANT THEM.


FOR THE PRIDE OF EIATTU!
WOW, WHOEVER'S IN THAT Z-95 SURE HAS GUTS TO PULL A SILERIAN STALL IN THAT CRATE.
WE GOTTA GET SOMEBODY ON THEIR FLANK, JANSON! WE'RE GETTING POUNDED--
LOOKS LIKE YOU GOT YOUR WISH, HOBBIE !!
LIBERATION!!!

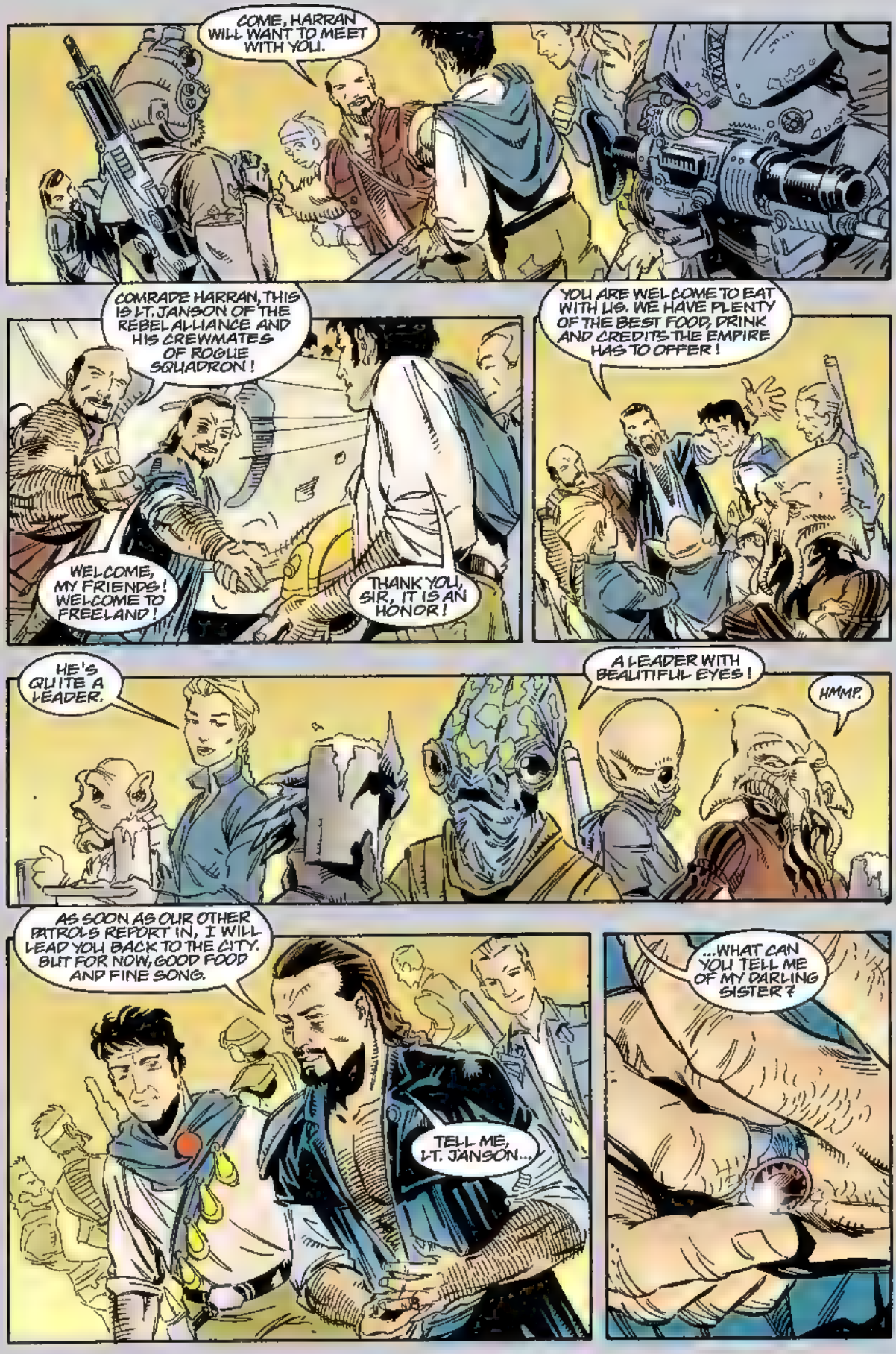

IT LOOKS LIKE THE IMPS ARE BREAKING OFF, PEOPLE!
JANSON, WE CAN'T LAND IN THAT MUCK. CAN YOU GUYS GET OUT ON YOUR OWN?
YEAH, THE IMPS ARE HEADING TO THE DEEP SWAMP. WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET BACK ALL RIGHT.
I THINK WE'VE GOT SOME PEOPLE TO THANK FIRST.
WELCOME. I AM SGT. ASHAAD OF THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION BATTALION.
LT. WES JANSON. PLEASED TO MEET YOU, YOU REALLY SAVED OUR HIDES.
FROM THE LOOKS OF THOSE X-WINGS, I WOULD SAY YOU'RE WITH THE REBEL ALLIANCE, CORRECT?
WELL...YES.

WONDERFUL, AN ENEMY OF THE EMPIRE IS AN ALLY OF OURS. COME, OUR CAMP IS NEARBY, MY COMMANDER WILL WISH TO HAVE A WORD WITH YOU.
THAT WAS SOME FLYING, COUNT PERNON! I THOUGHT THOSE EYEBALLS HAD YOU COLD.
I THINK HE'D EVEN GIVE YOU A RUN, PLOURR... I MEAN, PRINCESS ISPLOURRDACARTHA...
I WAS ONLY PERFORMING MY DUTY TO MY WORLD AND PRINCESS.
COME NOW, COUNT PERNON. YOUR SKILL IN FLIGHT DOES THE THRONE PROUD.
YOU HONOR ME, MY PRINCESS.
OH, COME ON! STOP IT, RIAL!
MY LADY, ON BEHALF OF THE PRIAMSTA, I WISH TO EXTEND MY CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR VICTORY OVER THE... INVADERS.
AHH, THANK YOU... COUNT...
LAABANN. COUNT ARIAN LAABANN, AT YOUR SERVICE, MY PRINCESS. THE PRIAMSTA WISHES TO HONOR YOU AND YOUR...COMRADES WITH A FORMAL SUPPER THIS EVENING.
WE WOULD BE HONORED!

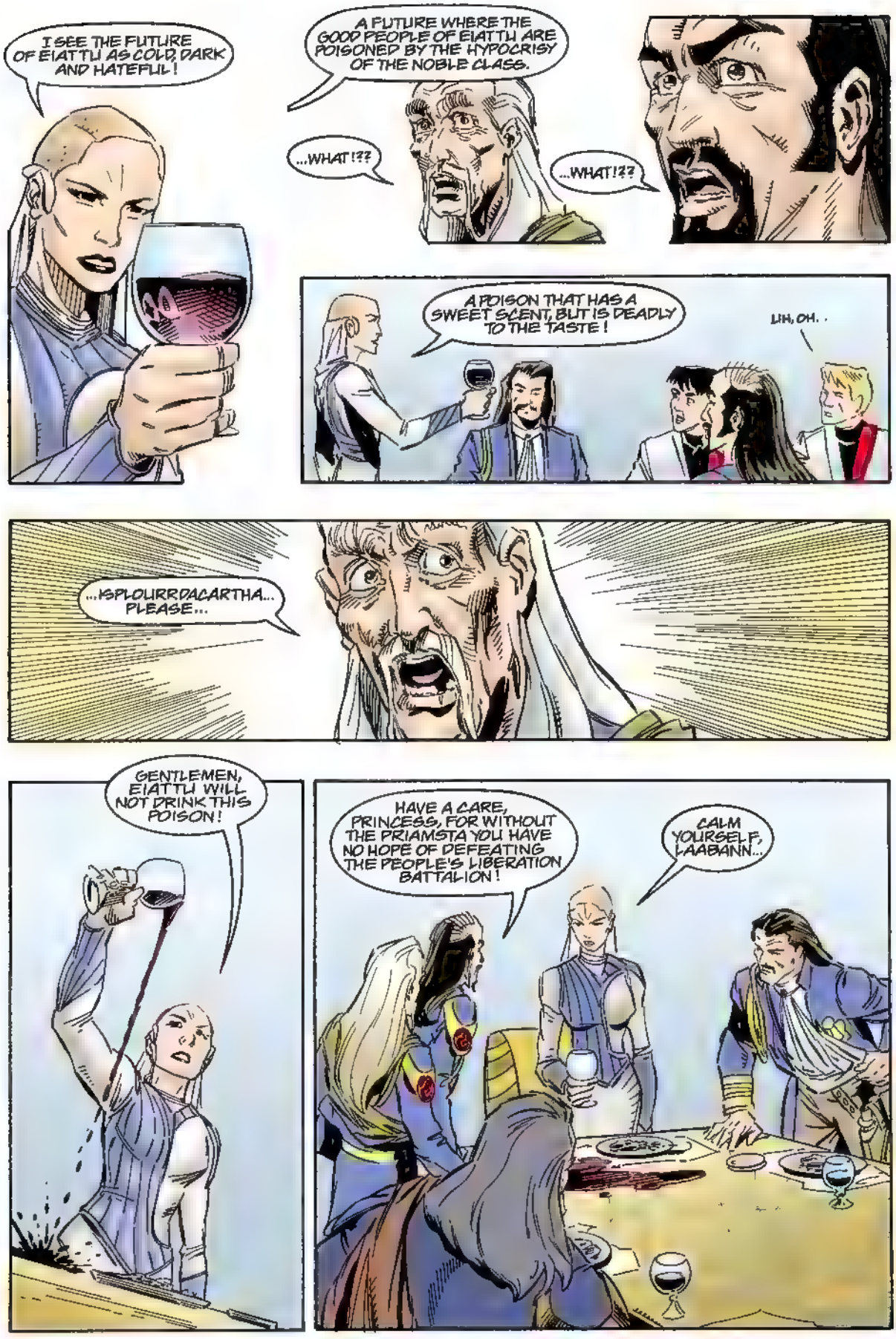

HERE WE ARE. YOU NOW STAND ON THE FREE SOIL OF THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION BATTALION!
...SOON, MY COMRADES, THERE WILL BE AN END TO WANT, AN END TO HUNGER OF BOTH THE BELLY AND THE SPIRIT!

SOON, COMRADES, WILL COME THE FALL OF THE NOBLES AND THEIR ALLIANCE WITH THE IMPERIALS. SOON ALL OF E'IATTU WILL BE THE LAND OF FREE MEN!!

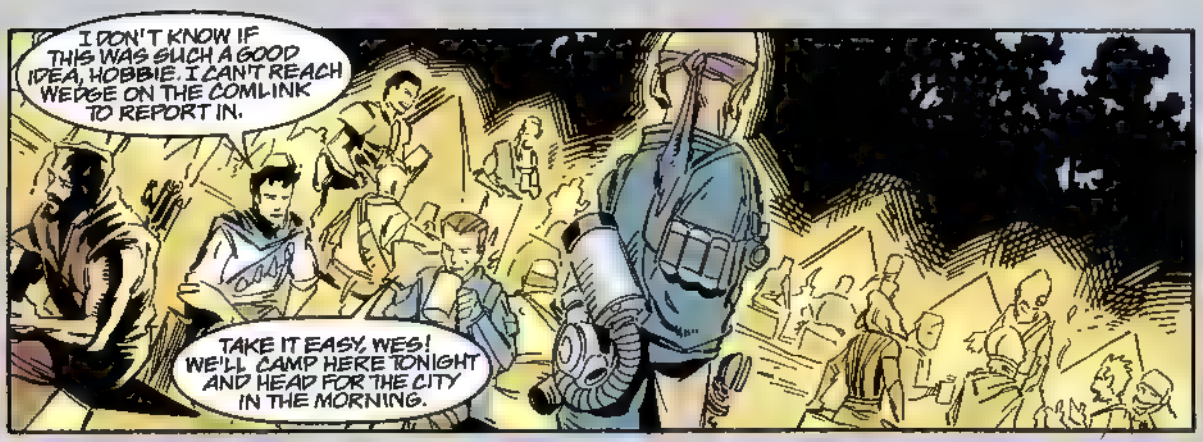
HARRAN!
LIBERATION!
HARRAN!
LIBERATION!

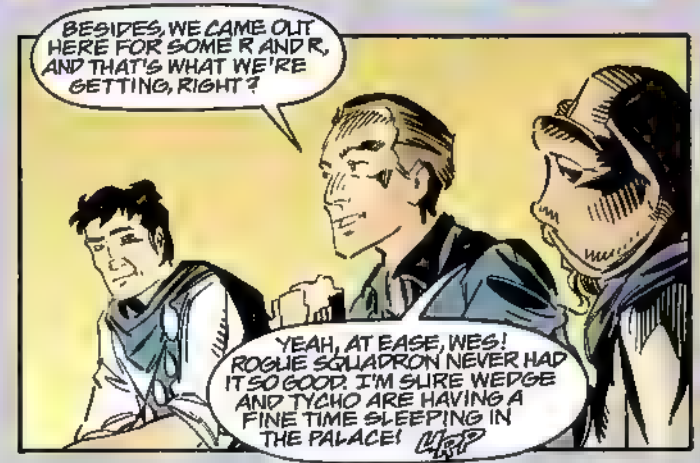

COME, HARRAN WILL WANT TO MEET WITH YOU.
COMRADE HARRAN, THIS IS LT. JANSON OF THE REBEL ALLIANCE AND HIS CREWMATES OF ROGUE SQUADRON!
WELCOME, MY FRIENDS! WELCOME TO FREELAND!
THANK YOU, SIR, IT IS AN HONOR!
YOU ARE WELCOME TO EAT WITH US. WE HAVE PLENTY OF THE BEST FOOD, DRINK AND CREDITS THE EMPIRE HAS TO OFFER!
HE'S QUITE A LEADER.
A LEADER WITH BEAUTIFUL EYES!
HMMP.
AS SOON AS OUR OTHER PATROLS REPORT IN, I WILL LEAD YOU BACK TO THE CITY. BUT FOR NOW, GOOD FOOD AND FINE SONG.
TELL ME, LT. JANSON...
...WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME OF MY DARLING SISTER?

AS I HAVE SAID, I HAVE A VISION OF EIATTU THAT DIFFERS FROM THAT OF THE GRAND DUKE'S. I SEE A RETURN TO THE GRAND DAYS, A RETURN TO THE GLORY THAT WAS ONCE EIATTU!
AN EIATTU RETURNED TO THE SIMPLER TIMES, WHEN THE COMMON FOLK WORKED THE LANDS OF THE NOBLES.
I'M SURE THE "COMMON FOLK" CAN'T WAIT...
YAWN
HOW I LONG FOR THE DAYS OF OUR FATHERS, WHEN THE SIMPLE FOLK OF EIATTU KNEW THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH THEY LIVED.
THANK YOU, COUNT LAABANN, FOR THAT... BREATHTAKING SPEECH.
NOBLEMEN OF EIATTU...


I SEE THE FUTURE OF EIATTU AS COLD, DARK AND HATEFUL!
A FUTURE WHERE THE GOOD PEOPLE OF EIATTU ARE POISONED BY THE HYPOCRISY OF THE NOBLE CLASS.
...WHAT!??
...WHAT!??
A POISON THAT HAS A SWEET SCENT, BUT IS DEADLY TO THE TASTE!
UH, OH. .
...ISPLOURRDACARTHA... PLEASE...
GENTLEMEN, EIATTU WILL NOT DRINK THIS POISON!
HAVE A CARE, PRINCESS, FOR WITHOUT THE PRIAMSTA YOU HAVE NO HOPE OF DEFEATING THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION BATTALION!
CALM YOURSELF, LAABANN...

THE TYRANNY OF THE NOBLES IS AT AN END, LAABANN. I WILL SEE TO THAT. IF YOU WISH A PLACE IN THE FUTURE OF EIATTU, EITHER STAND WITH THE THRONE...
...OR FALL.
tinkle
KRESH
tinkle
THE CHOICE IS YOURS.
STAND... OR FALL...
WELL... THAT COULD HAVE GONE BETTER.


I DON'T KNOW IF THIS WAS SUCH A GOOD IDEA, HOBBIE. I CAN'T REACH WEDGE ON THE COMLINK TO REPORT IN.
TAKE IT EASY, WES! WE'LL CAMP HERE TONIGHT AND HEAD FOR THE CITY IN THE MORNING.


BESIDES, WE CAME OUT HERE FOR SOME R AND R, AND THAT'S WHAT WE'RE GETTING, RIGHT?
YEAH, AT EASE, WES! ROGUE SQUADRON NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD. I'M SURE WEDGE AND TYCHO ARE HAVING A FINE TIME SLEEPING IN THE PALACE! LRP

SGT. ASHAAD, WILL HARRAN BE JOINING US FOR A DRINK?
OUR GREAT LEADER HAS GONE ON RECONNAISSANCE. HE SHOULD RETURN BY DAYBREAK TO LEAD YOU BACK TO THE CITY.

SEE, WE'LL LEAVE BY FIRST LIGHT! HAVE A DRINK!
OKAY. I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.

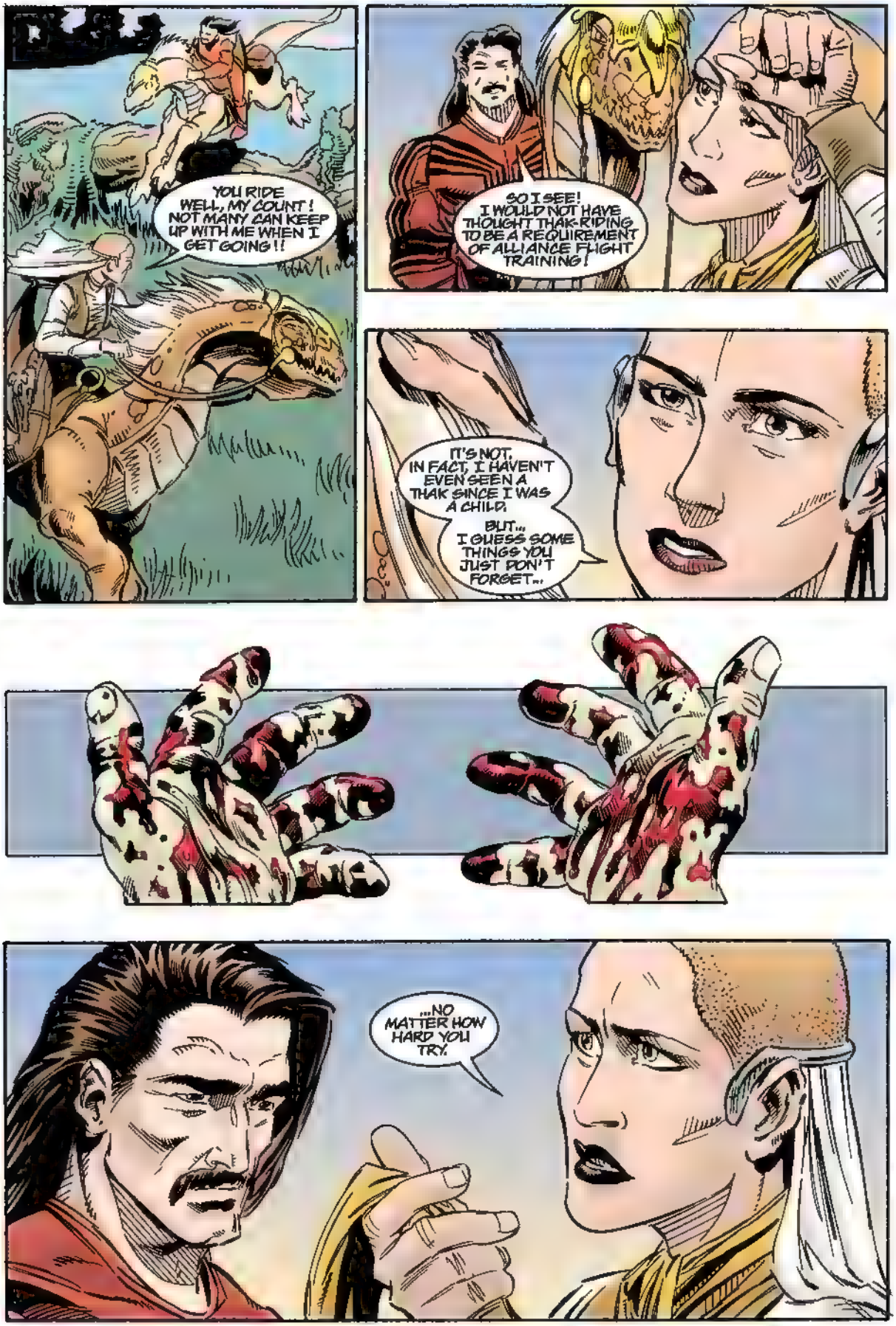
TO THE GOOD LIFE!

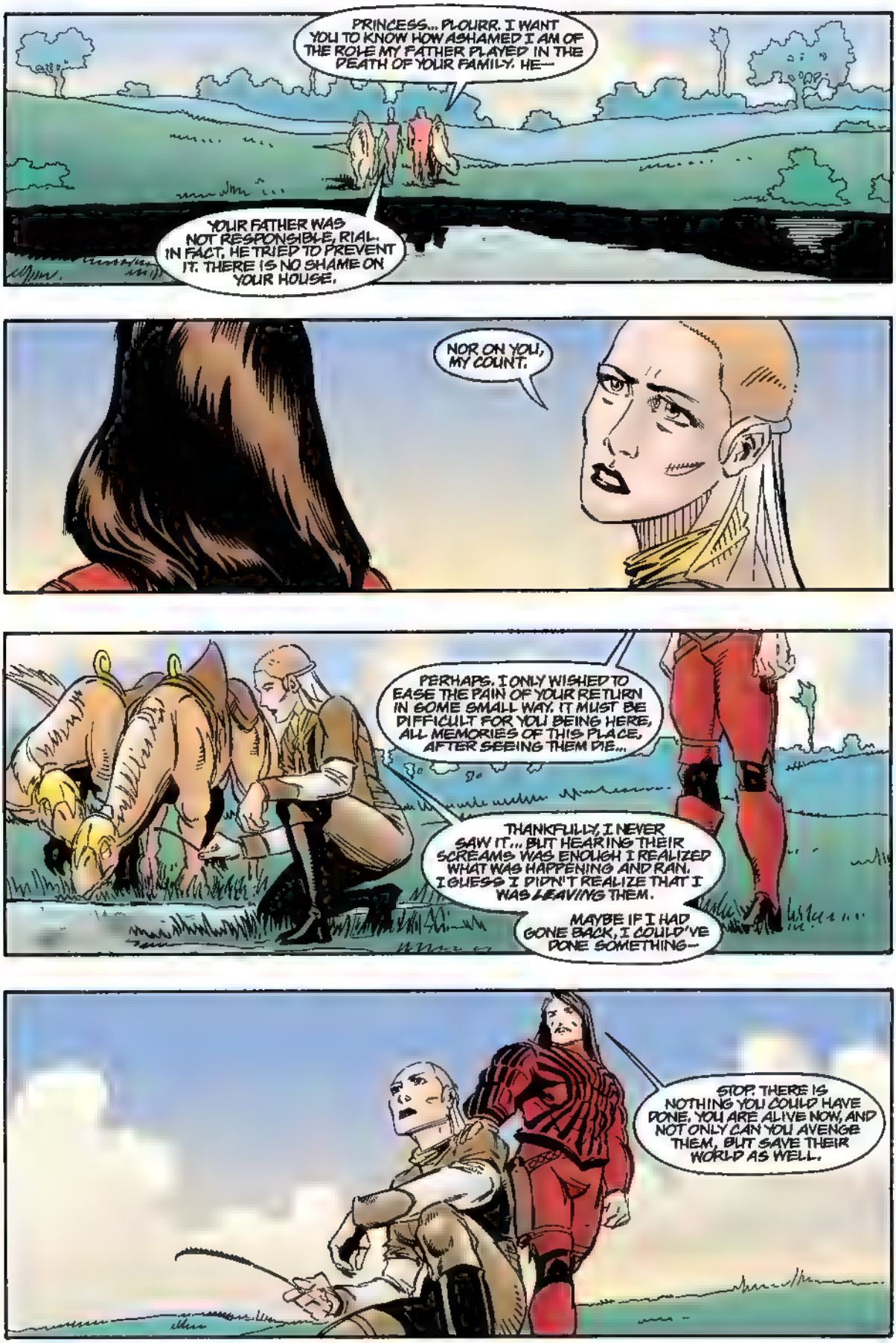
YAAAAAHHH!!!

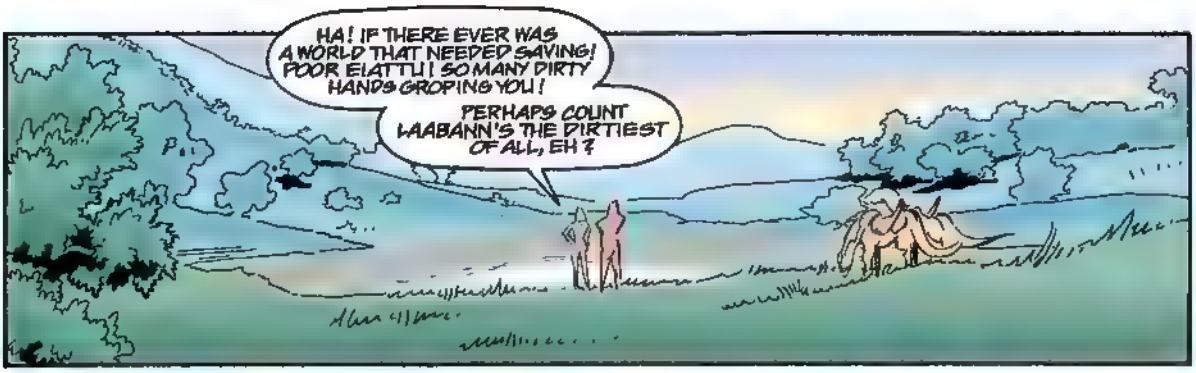
THEY ARE WELL TRAINED TO RESIST, DON'T YOU AGREE?
IT IS EASY TO RESIST WHEN YOU BELIEVE IN YOUR CAUSE AND KNOW NOTHING OF INTEREST.
A TRIBUTE TO THE MAN WHO INSPIRES AND CONTROLS THEM.
NEHH... OORG...
WHY, THANK YOU. YOU FLATTER ME.
...H--HARRAN!! YOU'VE COME FOR ME!
COMRADE... I TOLD THEM NOTHING... I DID NOT BETRAY THE CAUSE...
SHHH... I KNOW. I KNOW. YOU HAVE DONE WELL, COMRADE.

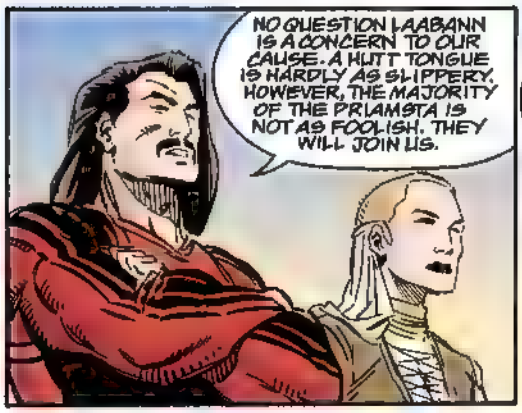
I'VE COME TO SEND YOU HOME, BACK TO THE PEOPLE.
JUST RELAX, COMRADE. I AM GOING TO SET YOU FREE.
YOU ARE FREE, COMRADE.
KRAAAAK
I DO LOVE A MAN WHO ENJOYS WORKING WITH HIS HANDS.
IF ONE IS TO RULE, ONE MUST NOT SHY FROM DIFFICULT DUTY.
THEN, SOON YOU SHALL RULE EIATTU, MY LOVE. AND THEN, NO ONE, NOT MY EMPIRE, THE ALLIANCE, THE PRIAMSTA, OR YOUR SISTER CAN STOP US.

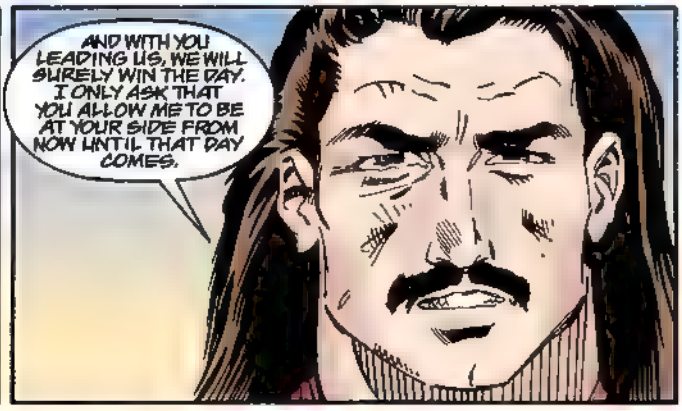
SOME OF HER EARLIEST MEMORIES ARE OF FLYING.
THE SENSATION WOULD LAST FOR ONLY A SECOND, BUT IT SENT SUCH A RUSH THROUGH THE YOUNG GIRL. SHE WAS NEVER AFRAID, BUT ALWAYS EXHILARATED, BECAUSE SHE KNEW HER FATHER WAS ALWAYS THERE TO CATCH HER.
NOTHING IN HER YOUNG LIFE MADE HER FEEL AS GOOD.
FOR MOST OF HER ADULT LIFE, PLOURR HAS BEEN FLYING, BUT NOW THE SENSATION IS DIFFERENT. SHE HAS BECOME A FIERCE WARRIOR AND PILOT WITHOUT PEER, BLASTING HER FOES OUT OF THE AIR...
... ALL THE WHILE, WISHING FOR THE DEATHS OF THE MEN WHO BUTCHERED HER FAMILY.
YEEEEHAAA!
NOW SHE'S RETURNED TO HER HOMEWORLD, AS SHE KNEW IN HER HEART SHE WOULD HAVE TO SOMEDAY... EVEN THOUGH NO ONE WOULD BE THERE TO CATCH HER.
THAT IS, UNTIL NOW.

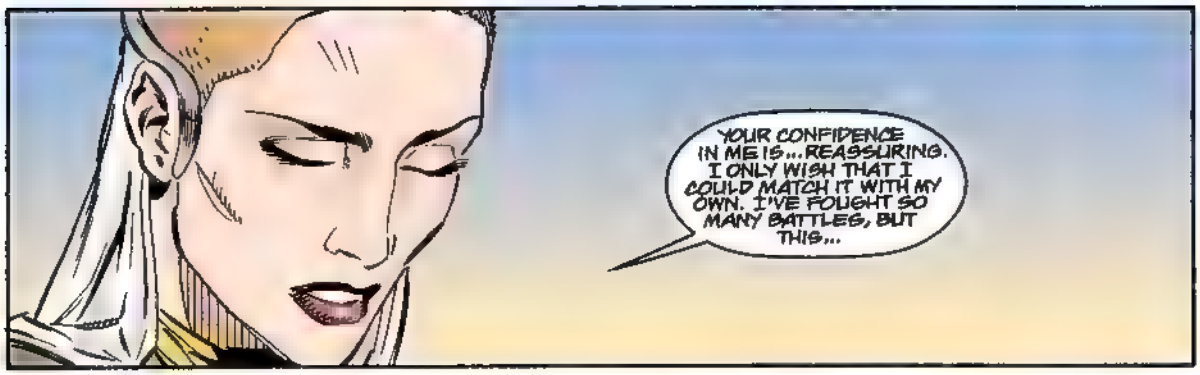

YOU RIDE WELL, MY COUNT! NOT MANY CAN KEEP UP WITH ME WHEN I GET GOING!!
SO I SEE! I WOULD NOT HAVE THOUGHT THAK-RIDING TO BE A REQUIREMENT OF ALLIANCE FLIGHT TRAINING!
IT'S NOT. IN FACT, I HAVEN'T EVEN SEEN A THAK SINCE I WAS A CHILD.
BUT... I GUESS SOME THINGS YOU JUST DON'T FORGET...
...NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY.

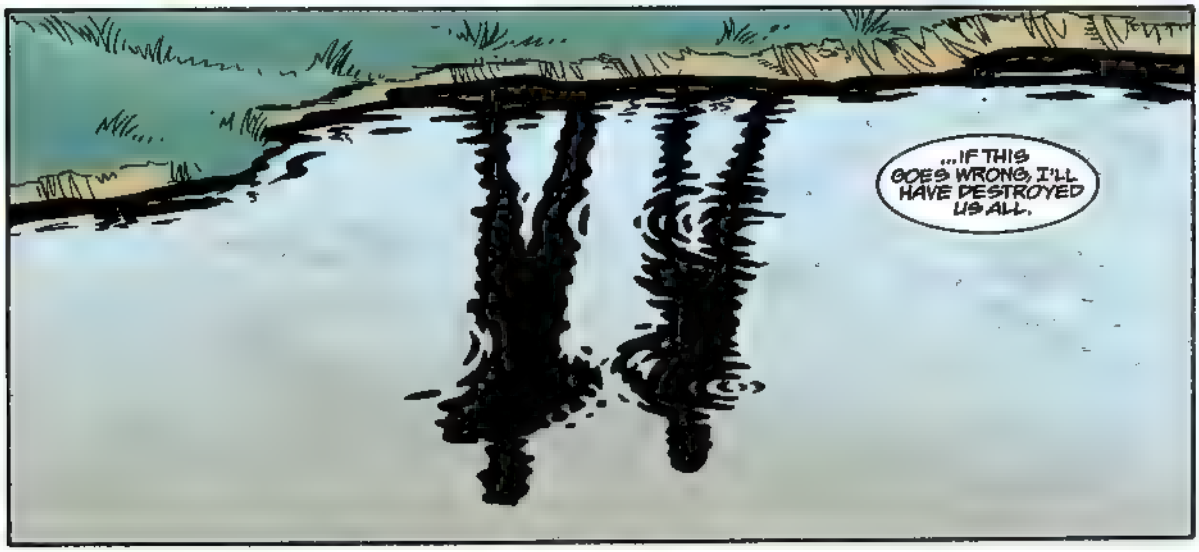

PRINCESS... PLOURR. I WANT YOU TO KNOW HOW ASHAMED I AM OF THE ROLE MY FATHER PLAYED IN THE DEATH OF YOUR FAMILY. HE—
YOUR FATHER WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE, RIAL. IN FACT, HE TRIED TO PREVENT IT. THERE IS NO SHAME ON YOUR HOUSE.
NOR ON YOU, MY COUNT.
PERHAPS. I ONLY WISHED TO EASE THE PAIN OF YOUR RETURN IN SOME SMALL WAY. IT MUST BE DIFFICULT FOR YOU BEING HERE, ALL MEMORIES OF THIS PLACE, AFTER SEEING THEM DIE...
THANKFULLY, I NEVER SAW IT... BUT HEARING THEIR SCREAMS WAS ENOUGH I REALIZED WHAT WAS HAPPENING AND RAN. I GUESS I DIDN'T REALIZE THAT I WAS LEAVING THEM.
MAYBE IF I HAD GONE BACK, I COULD'VE DONE SOMETHING—
STOP. THERE IS NOTHING YOU COULD HAVE DONE, YOU ARE ALIVE NOW, AND NOT ONLY CAN YOU AVENGE THEM, BUT SAVE THEIR WORLD AS WELL.

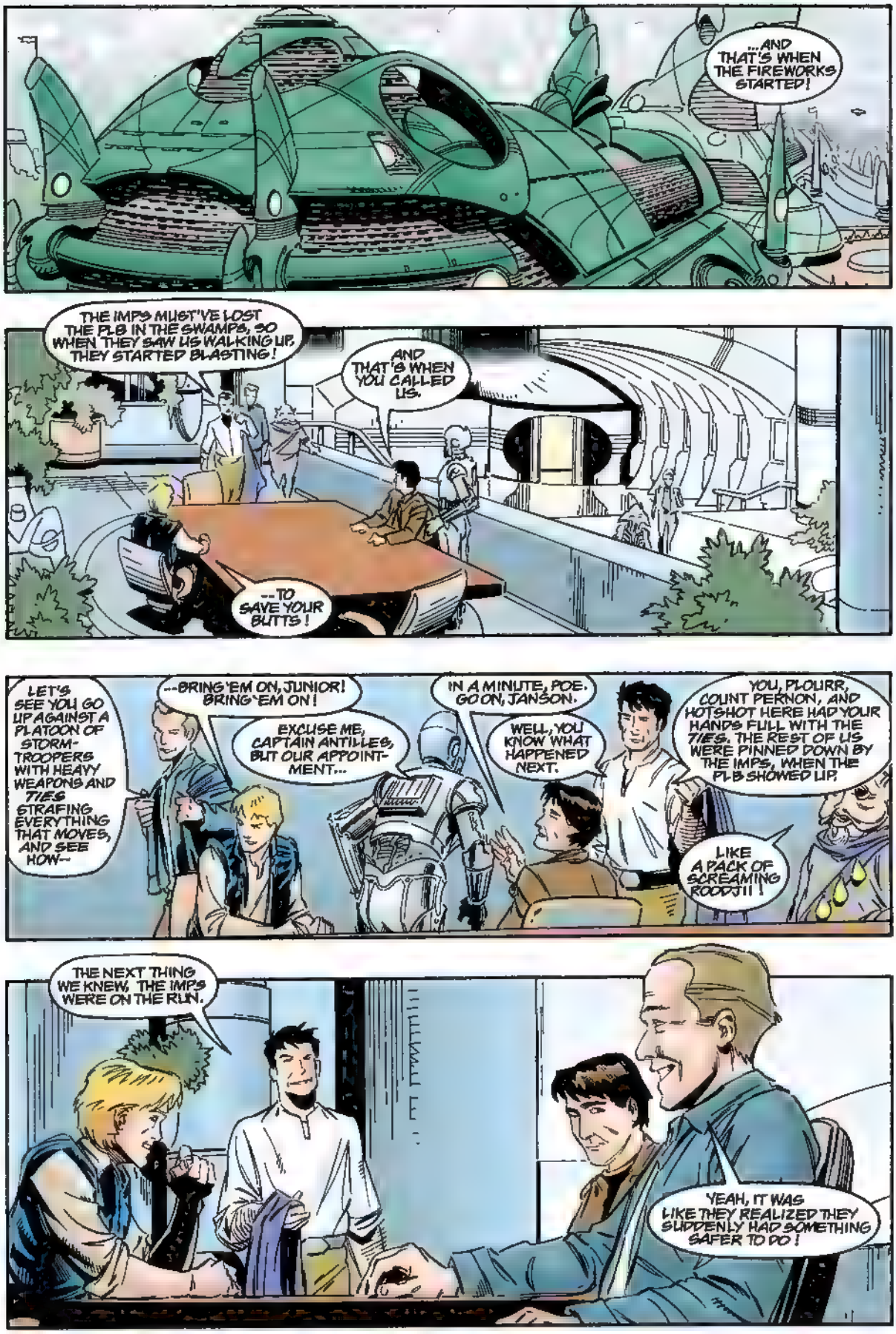

HA! IF THERE EVER WAS A WORLD THAT NEEDED SAVING! POOR ELATTU! SO MANY DIRTY HANDS GROPING YOU!
PERHAPS COUNT LAABANN'S THE DIRTIEST OF ALL, EH?

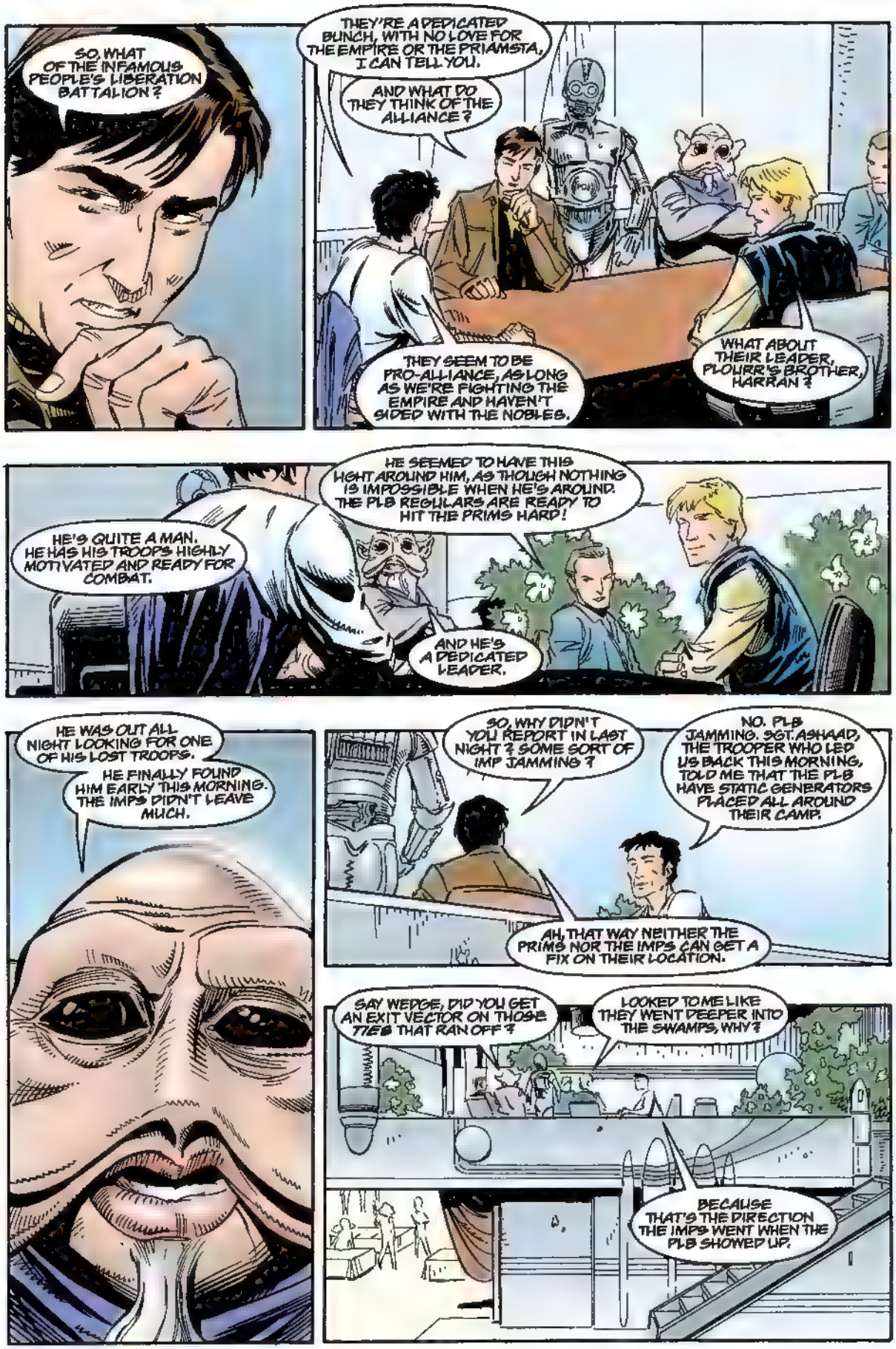

NO QUESTION LAABANN IS A CONCERN TO OUR CAUSE. A HUTT TONGUE IS HARDLY AS SLIPPERY. HOWEVER, THE MAJORITY OF THE PRIAMSTA IS NOT AS FOOLISH. THEY WILL JOIN US.

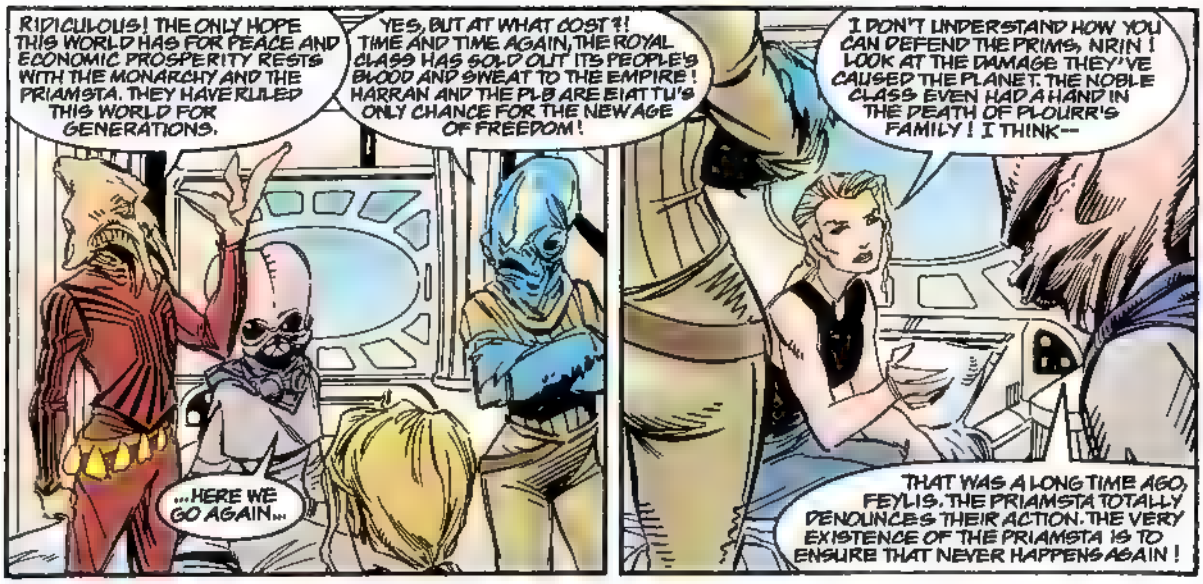

AND WITH YOU LEADING US, WE WILL SURELY WIN THE DAY. I ONLY ASK THAT YOU ALLOW ME TO BE AT YOUR SIDE FROM NOW UNTIL THAT DAY COMES.


YOUR CONFIDENCE IN ME IS... REASSURING. I ONLY WISH THAT I COULD MATCH IT WITH MY OWN. I'VE FOUGHT SO MANY BATTLES, BUT THIS...

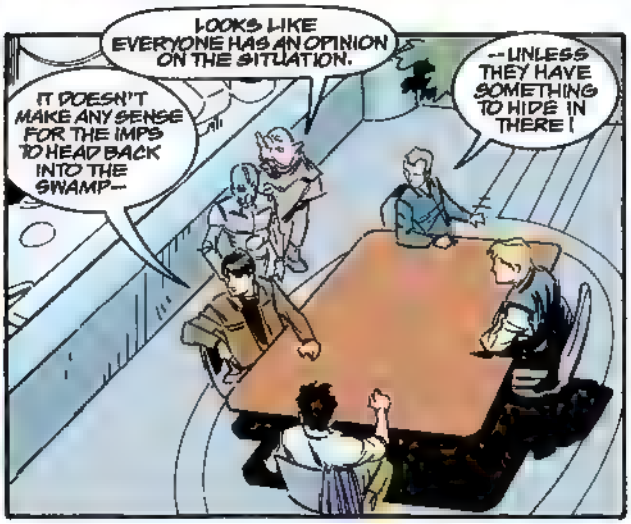

...IF THIS GOES WRONG, I'LL HAVE DESTROYED US ALL.

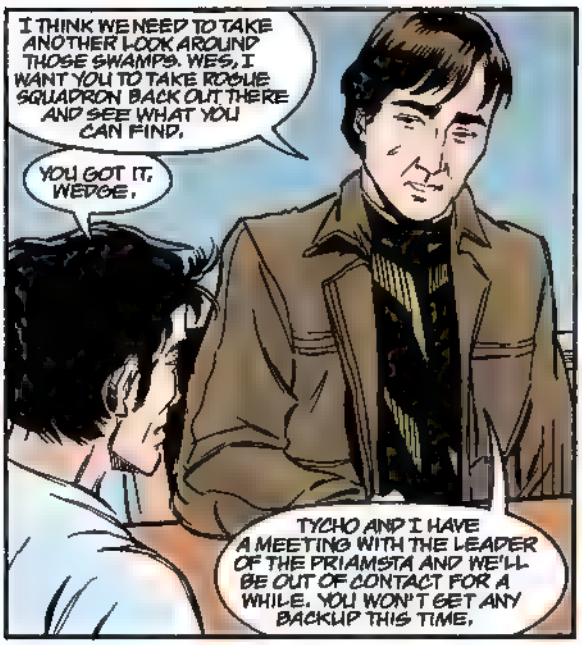

...AND THAT'S WHEN THE FIREWORKS STARTED!
THE IMPS MUST'VE LOST THE PLB IN THE SWAMPS, SO WHEN THEY SAW US WALKING UP, THEY STARTED BLASTING!
AND THAT'S WHEN YOU CALLED US.
--TO SAVE YOUR BUTTS!
LET'S SEE YOU GO UP AGAINST A PLATOON OF STORM-TROOPERS WITH HEAVY WEAPONS AND TIES STRAFING EVERYTHING THAT MOVES, AND SEE HOW--
--BRING 'EM ON, JUNIOR! BRING 'EM ON!
EXCUSE ME, CAPTAIN ANTILLES, BUT OUR APPOINT-MENT...
IN A MINUTE, POE. GO ON, JANSON.
WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.
YOU, PLOURR, COUNT PERNON, AND HOTSHOT HERE HAD YOUR HANDS FULL WITH THE TIES. THE REST OF US WERE PINNED DOWN BY THE IMPS, WHEN THE PLB SHOWED UP.
LIKE A PACK OF SCREAMING ROODJI!
THE NEXT THING WE KNEW, THE IMPS WERE ON THE RUN.
YEAH, IT WAS LIKE THEY REALIZED THEY SUDDENLY HAD SOMETHING SAFER TO DO!

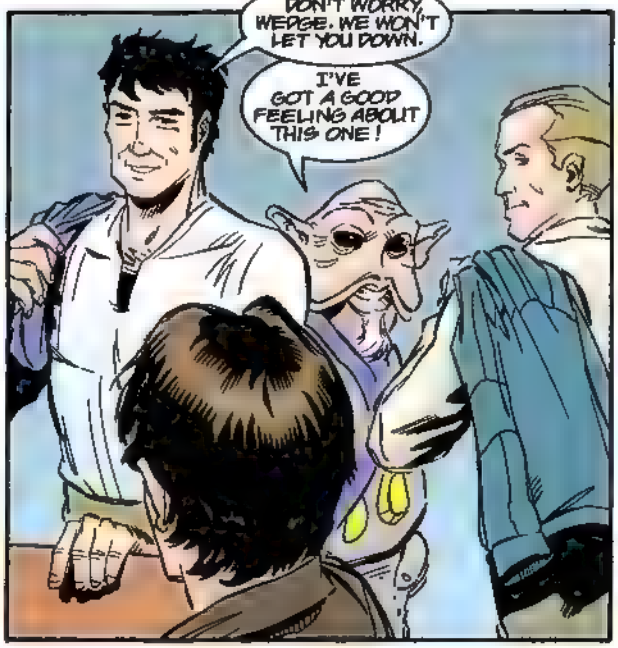

SO, WHAT OF THE INFAMOUS PEOPLE'S LIBERATION BATTALION?
THEY'RE A DEDICATED BUNCH, WITH NO LOVE FOR THE EMPIRE OR THE PRIAMSTA, I CAN TELL YOU.
AND WHAT DO THEY THINK OF THE ALLIANCE?
THEY SEEM TO BE PRO-ALLIANCE, AS LONG AS WE'RE FIGHTING THE EMPIRE AND HAVEN'T SIDED WITH THE NOBLES.
WHAT ABOUT THEIR LEADER, FLOURR'S BROTHER, HARRAN?
HE'S QUITE A MAN. HE HAS HIS TROOPS HIGHLY MOTIVATED AND READY FOR COMBAT.
HE SEEMED TO HAVE THIS LIGHT AROUND HIM, AS THOUGH NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WHEN HE'S AROUND. THE PLB REGULARS ARE READY TO HIT THE PRIMS HARD!
AND HE'S A DEDICATED LEADER.
HE WAS OUT ALL NIGHT LOOKING FOR ONE OF HIS LOST TROOPS.
HE FINALLY FOUND HIM EARLY THIS MORNING. THE IMPS DIDN'T LEAVE MUCH.
SO, WHY DIDN'T YOU REPORT IN LAST NIGHT? SOME SORT OF IMP JAMMING?
NO. PLB JAMMING. SGT. ASHAAD, THE TROOPER WHO LED US BACK THIS MORNING, TOLD ME THAT THE PLB HAVE STATIC GENERATORS PLACED ALL AROUND THEIR CAMP.
AH, THAT WAY NEITHER THE PRIMS NOR THE IMPS CAN GET A FIX ON THEIR LOCATION.
SAY WEDGE, DID YOU GET AN EXIT VECTOR ON THOSE TIES THAT RAN OFF?
LOOKED TO ME LIKE THEY WENT DEEPER INTO THE SWAMPS, WHY?
BECAUSE THAT'S THE DIRECTION THE IMPS WENT WHEN THE PLB SHOWED UP.

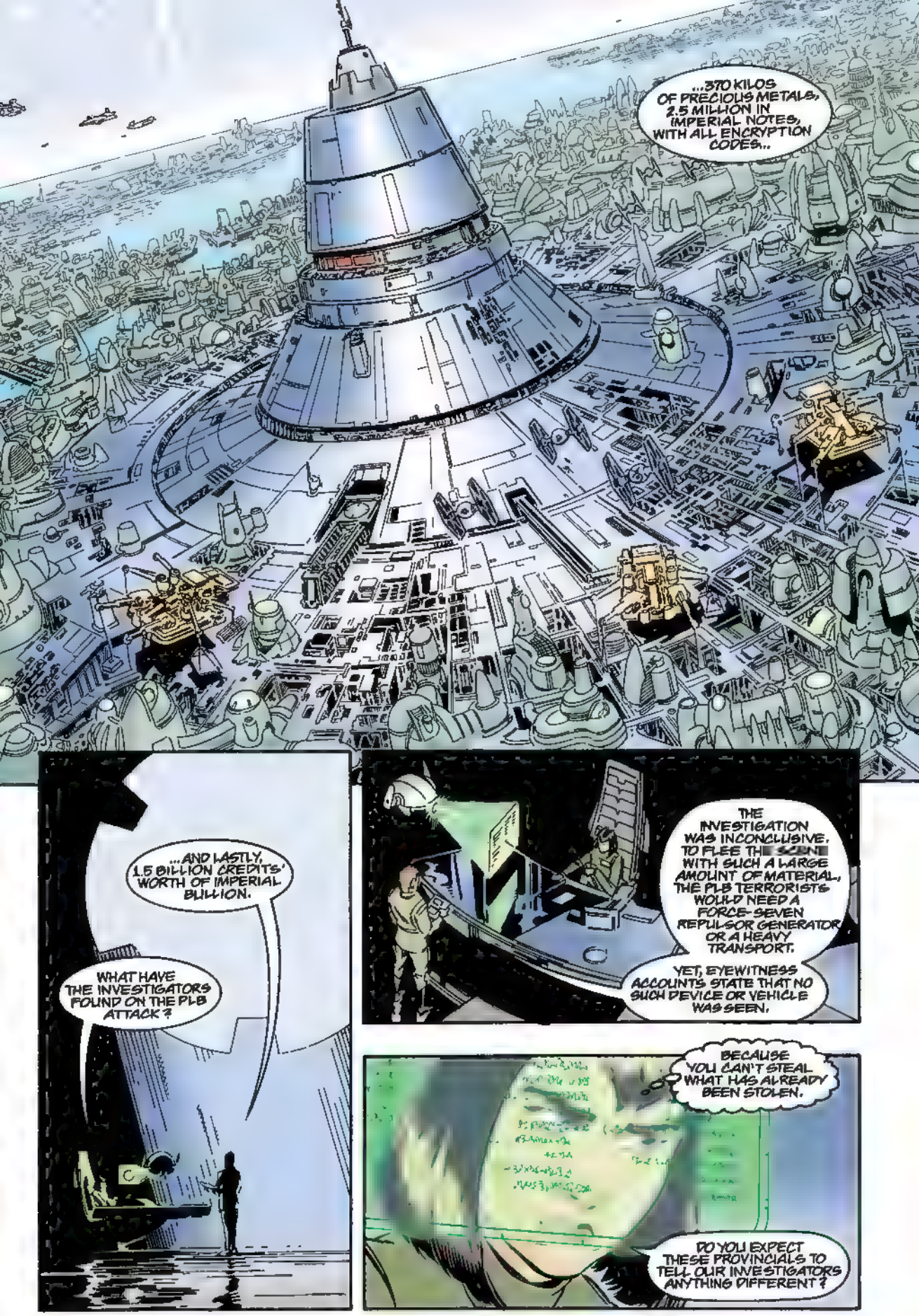

RIDICULOUS! THE ONLY HOPE THIS WORLD HAS FOR PEACE AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY RESTS WITH THE MONARCHY AND THE PRIAMSTA. THEY HAVE RULED THIS WORLD FOR GENERATIONS.
YES, BUT AT WHAT COST?! TIME AND TIME AGAIN, THE ROYAL CLASS HAS SOLD OUT ITS PEOPLE'S BLOOD AND SWEAT TO THE EMPIRE! HARRAN AND THE PLB ARE BIAT TU'S ONLY CHANCE FOR THE NEW AGE OF FREEDOM!
...HERE WE GO AGAIN...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW YOU CAN DEFEND THE PRIMS, NRIN! LOOK AT THE DAMAGE THEY'VE CAUSED THE PLANET. THE NOBLE CLASS EVEN HAD A HAND IN THE DEATH OF PLOURR'S FAMILY! I THINK--
THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO, FEYLIS. THE PRIAMSTA TOTALLY DENOUNCES THEIR ACTION. THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THE PRIAMSTA IS TO ENSURE THAT NEVER HAPPENS AGAIN!

HOW CAN WE BE SO SURE THAT THOSE NOBLES WHO TOOK PART IN THE KILLINGS AREN'T MEMBERS OF THE PRIMS? WHY SHOULD PLOURR TRUST THEM?
SHE MUST, FOR THE GOOD OF THE ROYAL HOUSE! PLOURR MUST PLACE HER PERSONAL FEELINGS ASIDE!

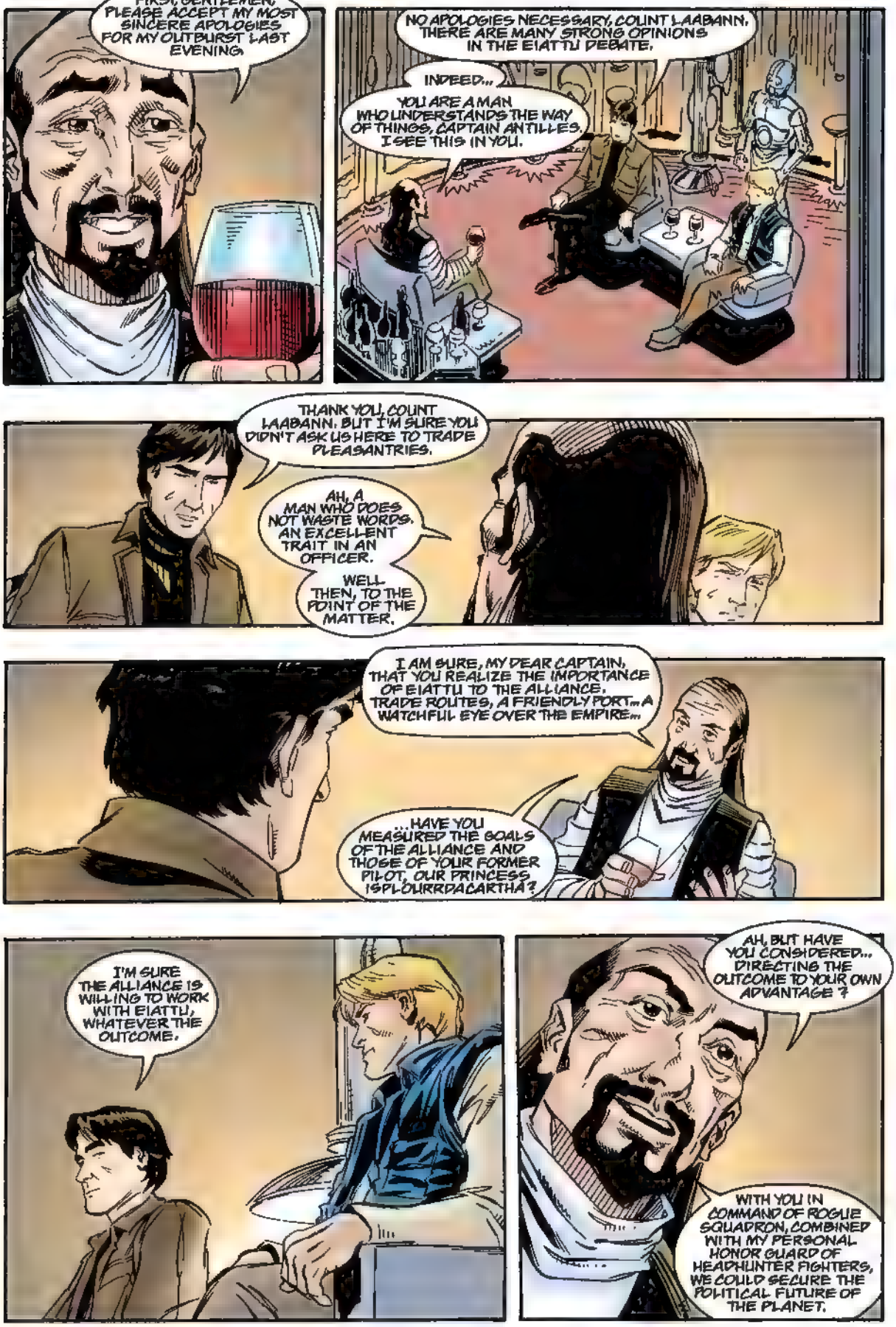

LOOKS LIKE EVERYONE HAS AN OPINION ON THE SITUATION.
IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE FOR THE IMPS TO HEAD BACK INTO THE SWAMP--
--UNLESS THEY HAVE SOMETHING TO HIDE IN THERE!


I THINK WE NEED TO TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AROUND THOSE SWAMPS. WES, I WANT YOU TO TAKE ROGUE SQUADRON BACK OUT THERE AND SEE WHAT YOU CAN FIND.
YOU GOT IT, WEDGE.
TYCHO AND I HAVE A MEETING WITH THE LEADER OF THE PRIAMSTA AND WE'LL BE OUT OF CONTACT FOR A WHILE. YOU WON'T GET ANY BACKUP THIS TIME.

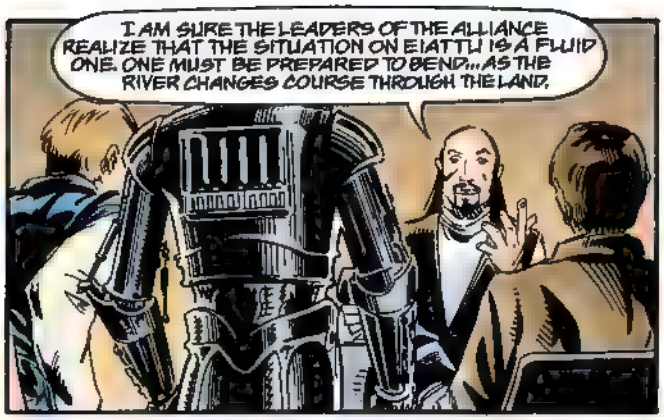

DON'T WORRY, WEDGE. WE WON'T LET YOU DOWN.
I'VE GOT A GOOD FEELING ABOUT THIS ONE!

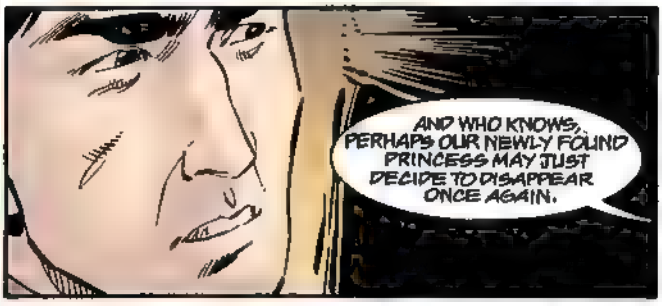

...370 KILOS OF PRECIOUS METALS, 2.5 MILLION IN IMPERIAL NOTES, WITH ALL ENCRYPTION CODES...
...AND LASTLY, 1.5 BILLION CREDITS' WORTH OF IMPERIAL BULLION.
WHAT HAVE THE INVESTIGATORS FOUND ON THE PLB ATTACK?
THE INVESTIGATION WAS INCONCLUSIVE. TO FLEE THE SCENE WITH SUCH A LARGE AMOUNT OF MATERIAL, THE PLB TERRORISTS WOULD NEED A FORCE-SEVEN REPULSOR GENERATOR OR A HEAVY TRANSPORT.
YET, EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS STATE THAT NO SUCH DEVICE OR VEHICLE WAS SEEN.
BECAUSE YOU CAN'T STEAL WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN STOLEN.
DO YOU EXPECT THESE PROVINCIALS TO TELL OUR INVESTIGATORS ANYTHING DIFFERENT?

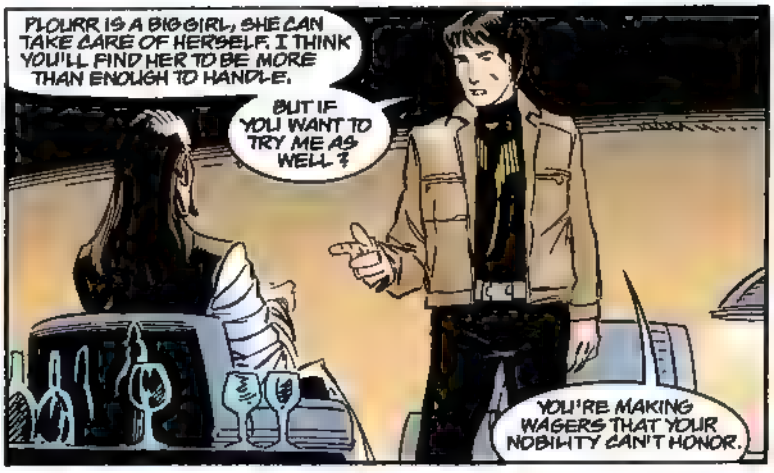
I AM SURE THE PLB PAYS WELL FOR THE PROVINCIALS' LOYALTY AND SILENCE.
INDEED, MY LADY.
SHOW ME THE ROYAL REPOSITORIES THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ATTACKED BY THE PLB.
THREE ROYAL REPOSITORIES REMAIN UNTOUCHED BY THE PLB TERRORISTS.
VERY WELL.
HAVE ALL THE WEALTH IN THOSE STOREHOUSES SHIPPED... HERE!
H-HERE?? BUT MY LADY, SURELY THE TERRORISTS WILL STRIKE AT THIS FACILITY.
BUT OF COURSE THEY WILL.
AND THIS TIME, WHEN THE SO-CALLED PEOPLE'S LIBERATION BATTALION ATTACK, THEY WILL HAVE A FULL REGIMENT OF STORM-TROOPERS WAITING FOR THEM.
THIS TIME, THERE WILL BE NO ESCAPE!

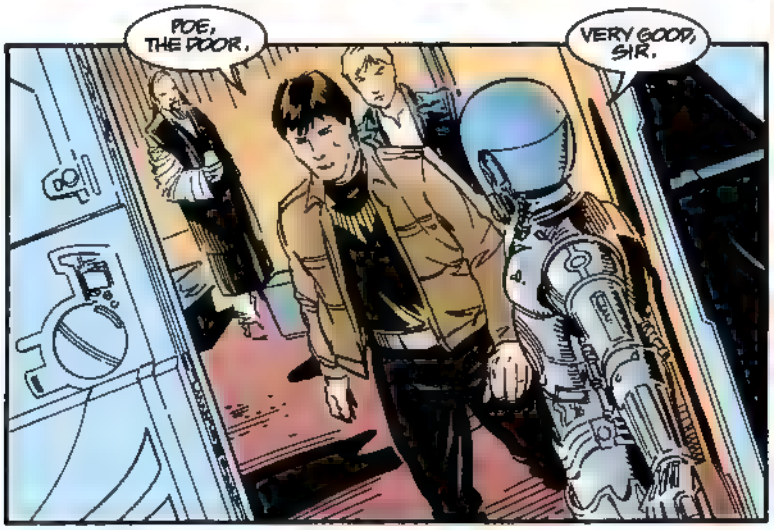

FIRST, GENTLEMEN, PLEASE ACCEPT MY MOST SINCERE APOLOGIES FOR MY OUTBURST LAST EVENING.
NO APOLOGIES NECESSARY, COUNT LAABANN. THERE ARE MANY STRONG OPINIONS IN THE EIATTU DEBATE.
INDEED...
YOU ARE A MAN WHO UNDERSTANDS THE WAY OF THINGS, CAPTAIN ANTILLES. I SEE THIS IN YOU.
THANK YOU, COUNT LAABANN. BUT I'M SURE YOU DIDN'T ASK US HERE TO TRADE PLEASANTRIES.
AH, A MAN WHO DOES NOT WASTE WORDS. AN EXCELLENT TRAIT IN AN OFFICER.
WELL THEN, TO THE POINT OF THE MATTER.
I AM SURE, MY DEAR CAPTAIN, THAT YOU REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF EIATTU TO THE ALLIANCE. TRADE ROUTES, A FRIENDLY PORT... A WATCHFUL EYE OVER THE EMPIRE...
...HAVE YOU MEASURED THE GOALS OF THE ALLIANCE AND THOSE OF YOUR FORMER PILOT, OUR PRINCESS ISPLOURRDACARTHA?
I'M SURE THE ALLIANCE IS WILLING TO WORK WITH EIATTU, WHATEVER THE OUTCOME.
AH, BUT HAVE YOU CONSIDERED... DIRECTING THE OUTCOME TO YOUR OWN ADVANTAGE?
WITH YOU IN COMMAND OF ROGUE SQUADRON, COMBINED WITH MY PERSONAL HONOR GUARD OF HEADHUNTER FIGHTERS, WE COULD SECURE THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF THE PLANET.

WHAT!!?? TEAM UP WITH YOU AGAINST PLOURR??!! DON'T BET ON IT, YOU--
--EASY, TYCHO.
COUNT LAABANN, THAT WILL NEVER HAPPEN. THE ALLIANCE CANNOT AND WILL NOT TAKE SIDES IN THIS MATTER. WE--
CAPTAIN, SHOULD YOU NOT INFORM YOUR SUPERIORS OF MY OFFER?


I AM SURE THE LEADERS OF THE ALLIANCE REALIZE THAT THE SITUATION ON ELATTU IS A FLUID ONE. ONE MUST BE PREPARED TO BEND... AS THE RIVER CHANGES COURSE THROUGH THE LAND.

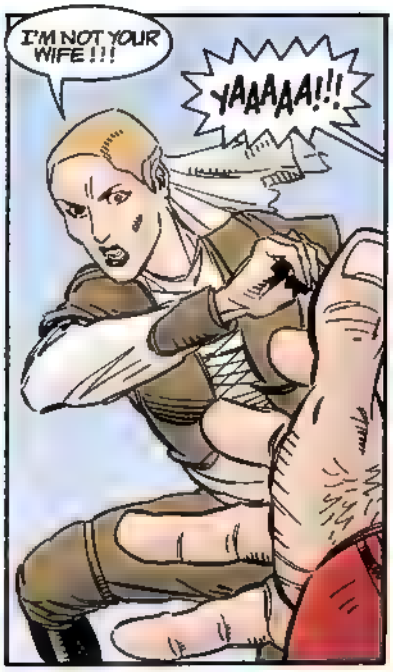

AND WHO KNOWS, PERHAPS OUR NEWLY FOUND PRINCESS MAY JUST DECIDE TO DISAPPEAR ONCE AGAIN.


PLOURR IS A BIG GIRL, SHE CAN TAKE CARE OF HERSELF. I THINK YOU'LL FIND HER TO BE MORE THAN ENOUGH TO HANDLE.
BUT IF YOU WANT TO TRY ME AS WELL?
YOU'RE MAKING WAGERS THAT YOUR NOBILITY CAN'T HONOR.

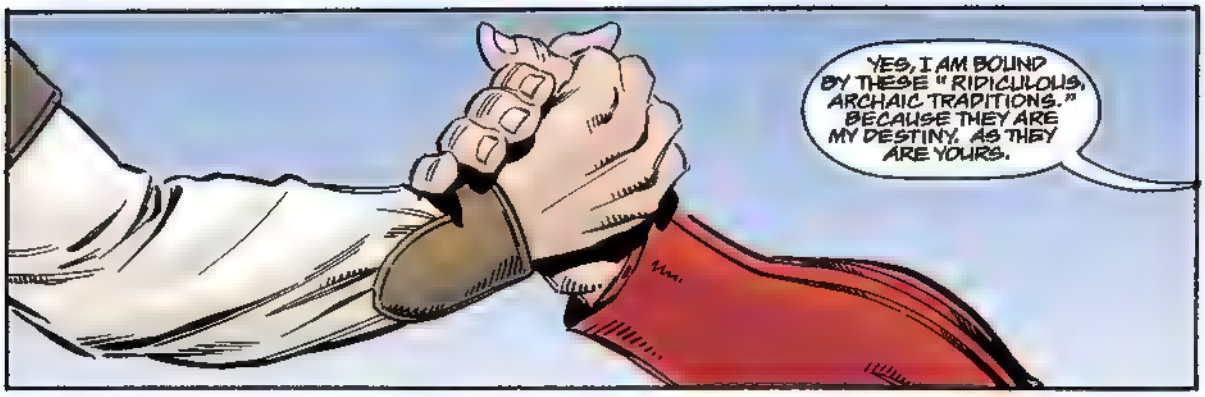

POE, THE DOOR.
VERY GOOD, SIR.

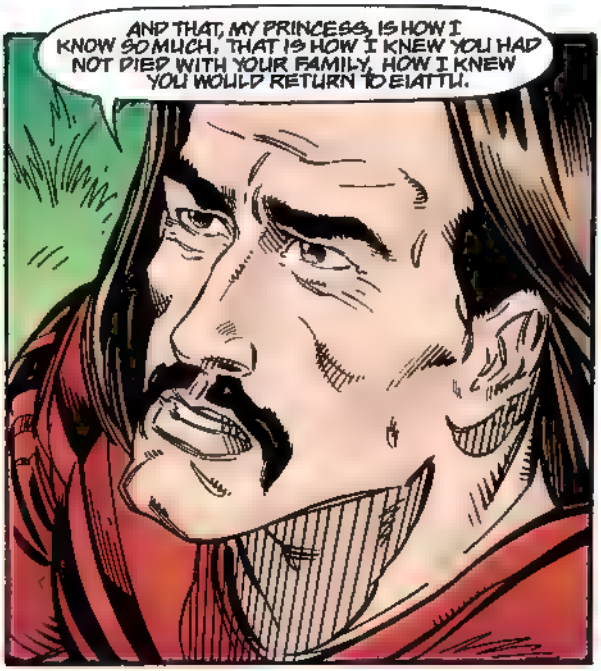
DAMN THAT REBEL UPSTART.

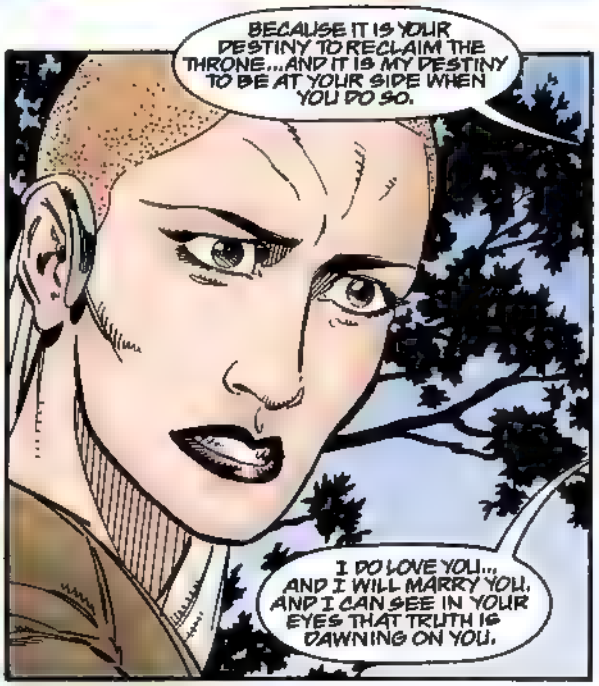
THE PLB OR THE PRIAMSTA, THESE ARE THE ALLIES I HAVE TO CHOOSE FROM? AT LEAST I KNOW WHERE THE EMPIRE STANDS!
I KNOW YOU WILL MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE.
OH? AND JUST HOW DO YOU KNOW?
BECAUSE I KNOW YOU...JUST AS EVERY HUSBAND SHOULD KNOW HIS WIFE.


I'M NOT YOUR WIFE!!!
YAAAAA!!!

I'M SORRY. BUT HOW CAN YOU CONTINUE TO HOLD ON TO THESE RIDICULOUS, ARCHAIC TRADITIONS?
WHAT IF I HAD BEEN DEAD ALL THESE YEARS, KILLED WITH MY FAMILY? WHO WOULD YOU LOVE THEN?
NO ONE. I WOULD HAVE DIED WITH YOU.

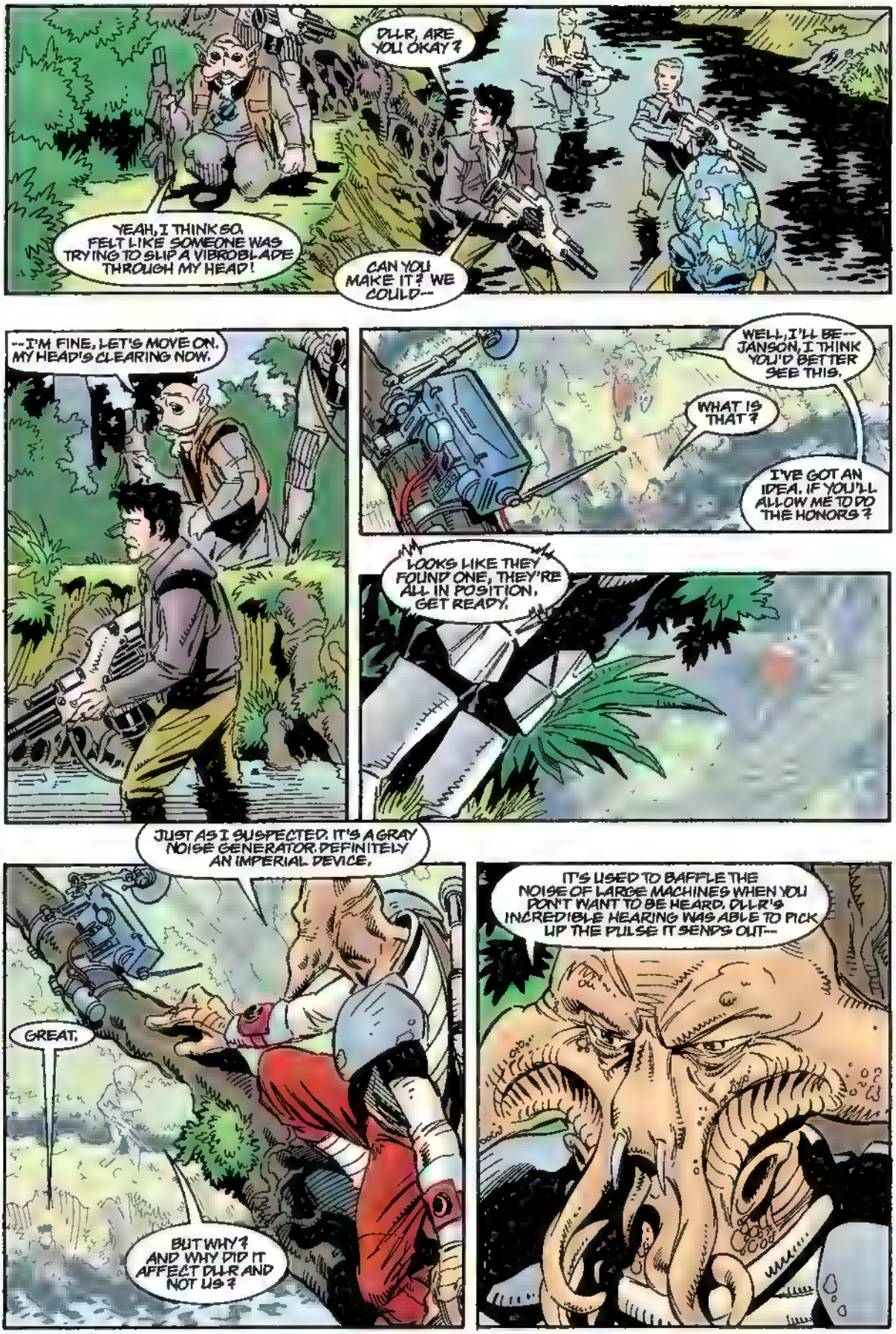

YES, I AM BOUND BY THESE "RIDICULOUS, ARCHAIC TRADITIONS." BECAUSE THEY ARE MY DESTINY, AS THEY ARE YOURS.

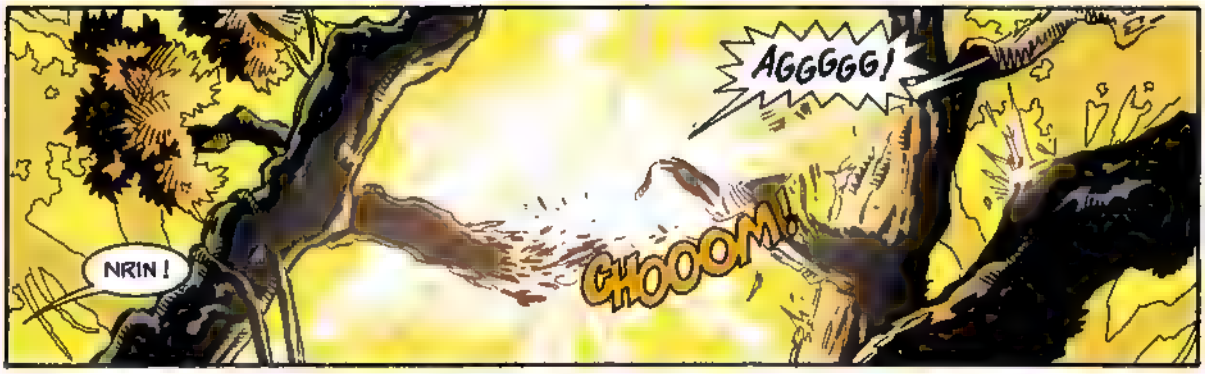

AND THAT, MY PRINCESS, IS HOW I KNOW SO MUCH. THAT IS HOW I KNEW YOU HAD NOT DIED WITH YOUR FAMILY. HOW I KNEW YOU WOULD RETURN TO ELATTU.

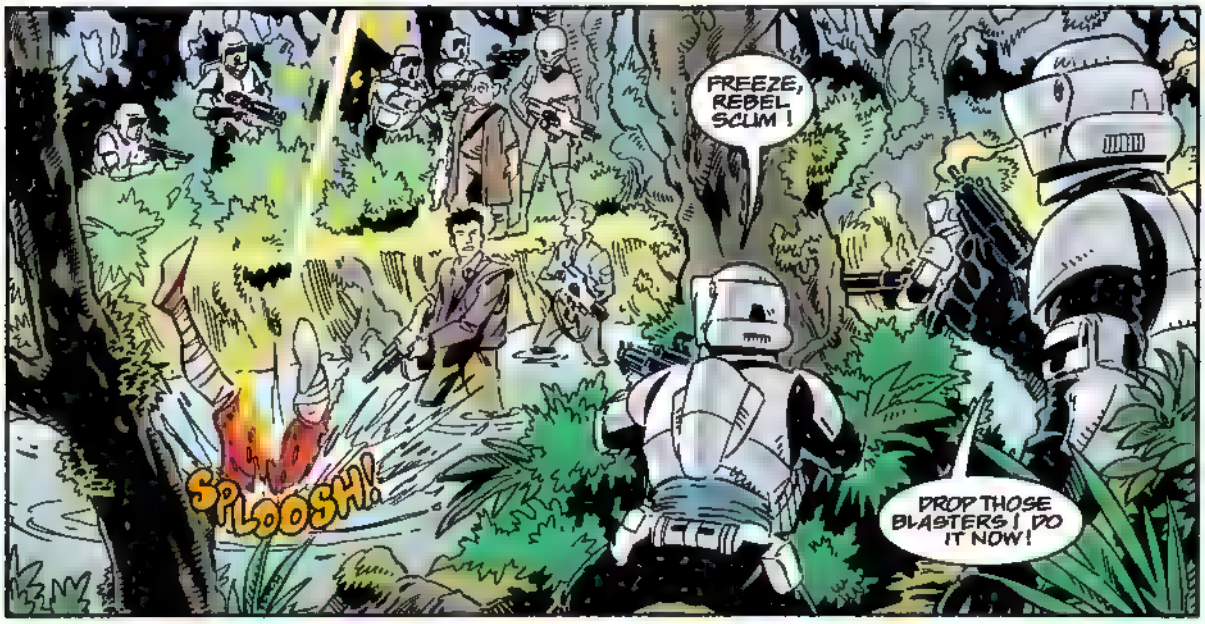

BECAUSE IT IS YOUR DESTINY TO RECLAIM THE THRONE...AND IT IS MY DESTINY TO BE AT YOUR SIDE WHEN YOU DO SO.
I DO LOVE YOU... AND I WILL MARRY YOU. AND I CAN SEE IN YOUR EYES THAT TRUTH IS DAWNING ON YOU.

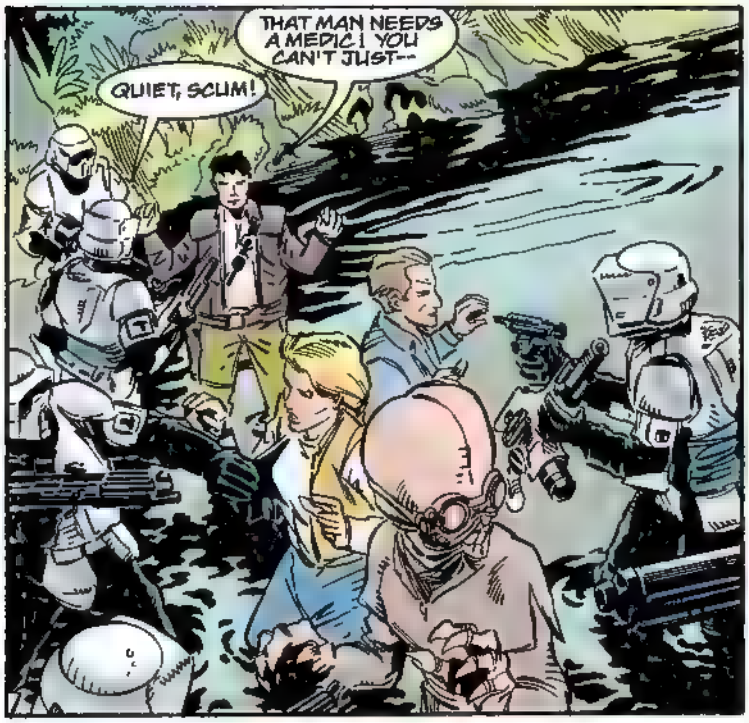
DOESN'T IT MATTER THAT I DON'T LOVE YOU?
I WOULD PREFER IT, OF COURSE, BUT--
COME QUIETLY, PRINCESS, AND YOU WILL NOT BE HARMED!
QUIETLY, EH? I DON'T THINK SO.

WATCH YOUR SPACING, EVERYBODY. STAY SHARP.
HEY, DLLR, YOU HEAR ANYTHING YET?
WHAT?! NO, I DON'T HEAR A THING, SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH THIS PLACE, I TOLD YOU I HAD A VERY BAD--
OWWWWW!!!
DLLR, WHAT'S WRONG?!


DLLR, ARE YOU OKAY?
YEAH, I THINK SO. FELT LIKE SOMEONE WAS TRYING TO SLIP A VIBROBLADE THROUGH MY HEAD!
CAN YOU MAKE IT? WE COULD--
--I'M FINE, LET'S MOVE ON. MY HEAD'S CLEARING NOW.
WELL, I'LL BE-- JANSON, I THINK YOU'D BETTER SEE THIS.
WHAT IS THAT?
I'VE GOT AN IDEA. IF YOU'LL ALLOW ME TO DO THE HONORS?
LOOKS LIKE THEY FOUND ONE, THEY'RE ALL IN POSITION. GET READY.
JUST AS I SUSPECTED. IT'S A GRAY NOISE GENERATOR. DEFINITELY AN IMPERIAL DEVICE.
GREAT.
BUT WHY? AND WHY DID IT AFFECT DLLR AND NOT US?
IT'S USED TO BAFFLE THE NOISE OF LARGE MACHINES WHEN YOU DON'T WANT TO BE HEARD. DLLR'S INCREDIBLE HEARING WAS ABLE TO PICK UP THE PULSE IT SENDS OUT--


AGGGGG!
NRIN!
KHOOOM!

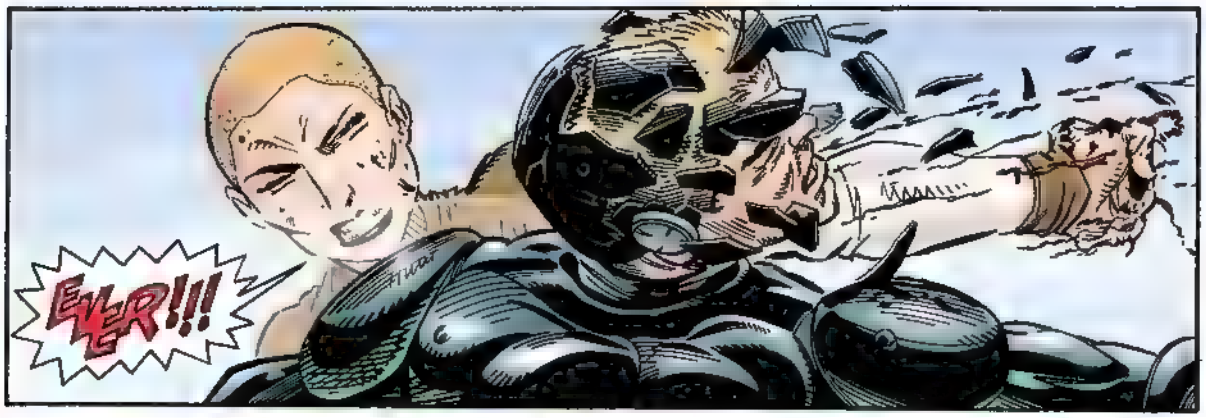

FREEZE, REBEL SCUM!
SPLOOSH!
DROP THOSE BLASTERS! DO IT NOW!


THAT MAN NEEDS A MEDIC! YOU CAN'T JUST--
QUIET, SCUM!

I THOUGHT SHE WANTED THEM ALL ALIVE?
WHAT'S ONE DEAD REBEL, MORE OR LESS?

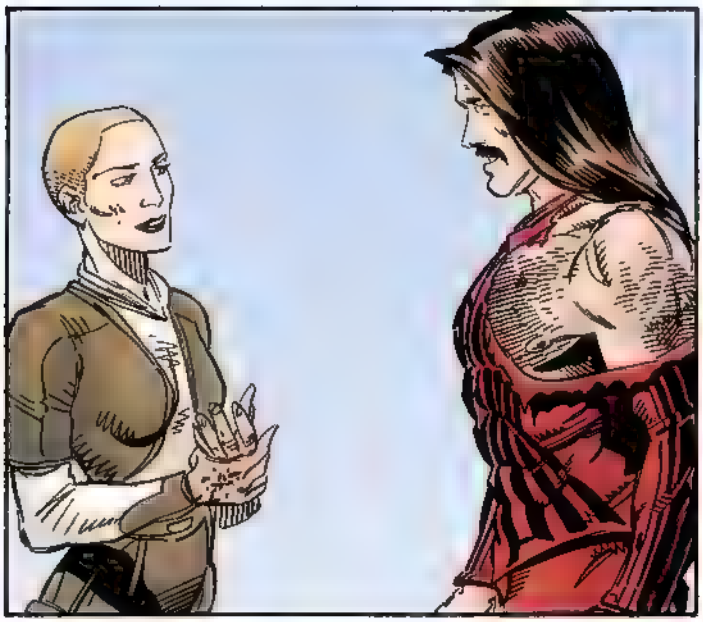
IS THIS QUIET ENOUGH FOR YOU?!!
KRACKKKK!
AAHHHGGG!!
PRINCESS!!!!
SITHSPAWN!!!

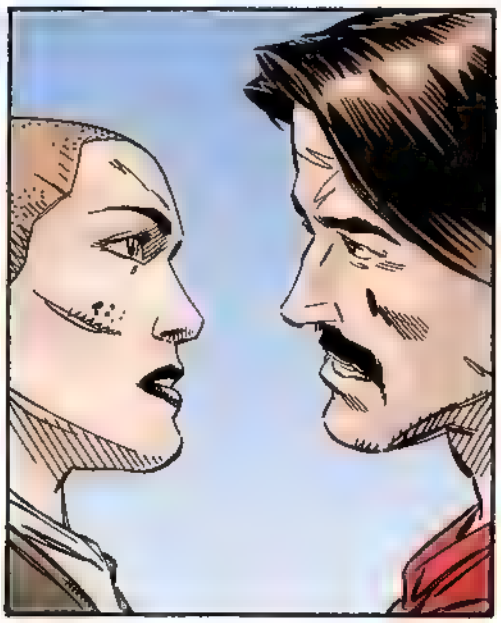
DON'T YOU--
--EVER--
--TOUCH ME--
--AGAIN!!!

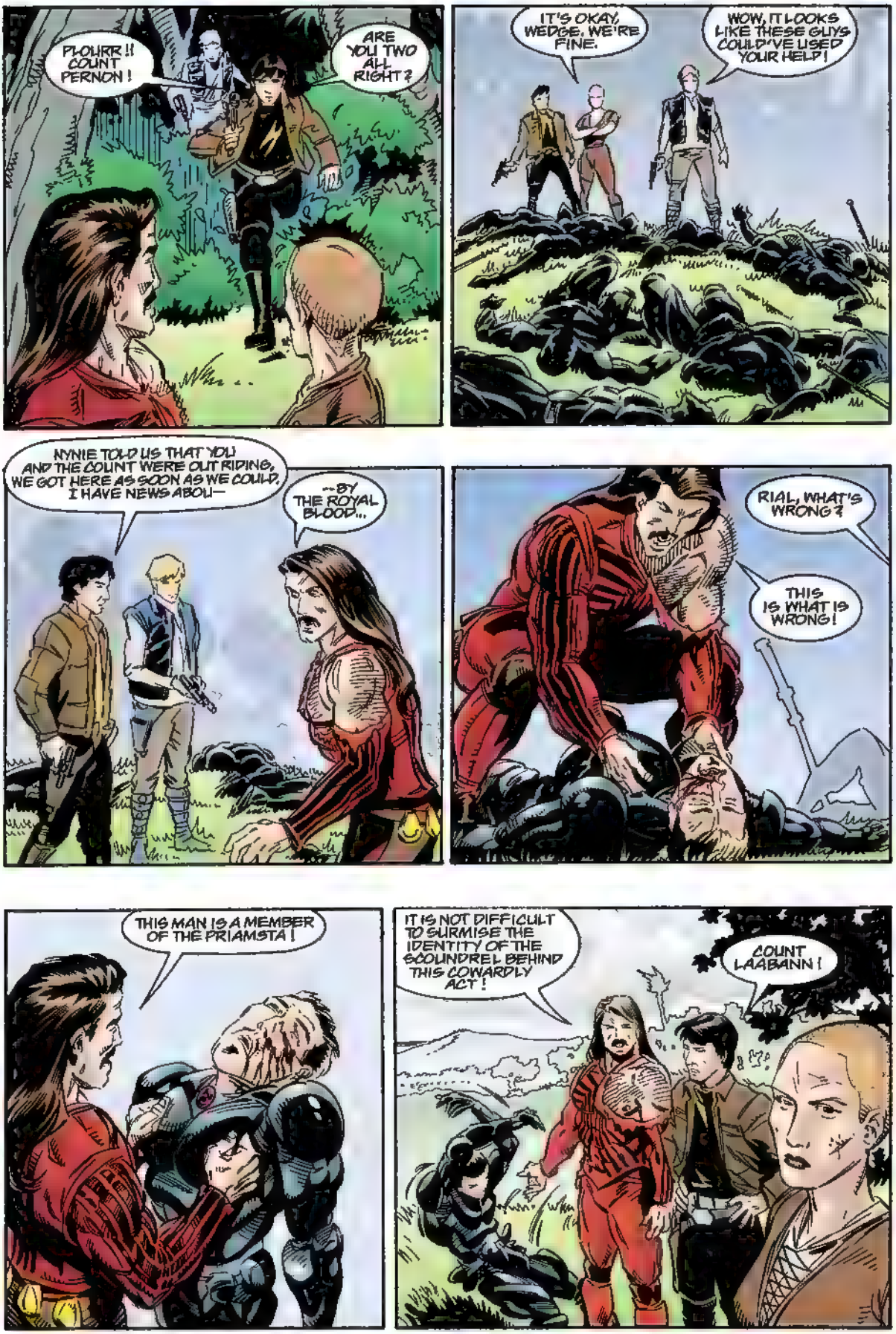

EEEER!!!

RIAL... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

JUST FINE, MY PRINCESS.
HOW ABOUT YOU?



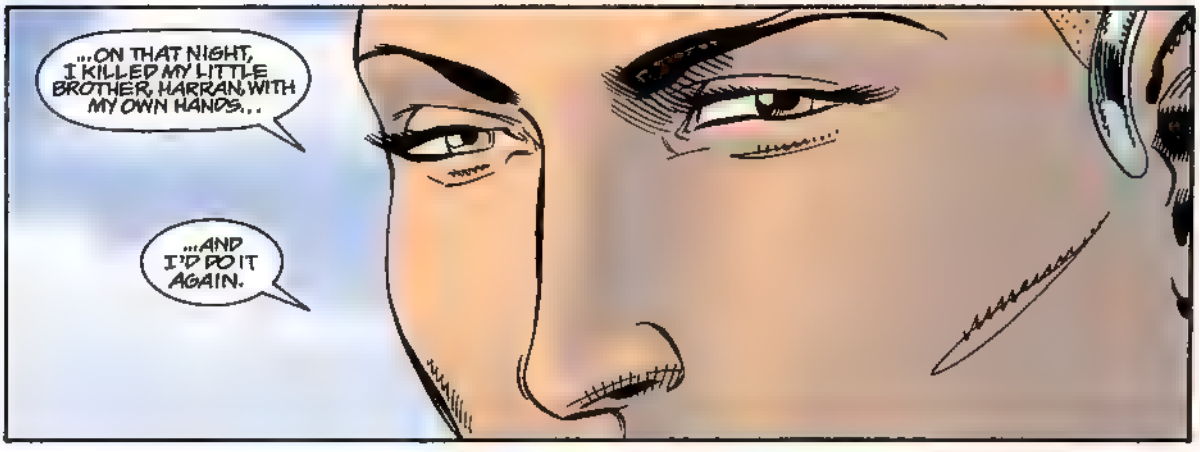



PLOURR!! COUNT PERNON!
ARE YOU TWO ALL RIGHT?
IT'S OKAY, WEDGE, WE'RE FINE.
WOW, IT LOOKS LIKE THESE GUYS COULD'VE USED YOUR HELP!
NYNIE TOLD US THAT YOU AND THE COUNT WERE OUT RIDING, WE GOT HERE AS SOON AS WE COULD. I HAVE NEWS ABOU—
—BY THE ROYAL BLOOD...
RIAL, WHAT'S WRONG?
THIS IS WHAT IS WRONG!
THIS MAN IS A MEMBER OF THE PRIAMSTA!
IT IS NOT DIFFICULT TO SURMISE THE IDENTITY OF THE SCOUNDREL BEHIND THIS COWARDLY ACT!
COUNT LAABANN!

HOW CAN YOU BE SO SURE, WEDGE?
BECAUSE TYCHO AND I MET WITH HIM THIS MORNING, WHERE HE PROPOSED THAT ROGUE SQUADRON JOIN HIM IN THE FIGHT AGAINST YOU.
SUCH TREACHERY! I WILL SURELY SEND HIM THE WAY OF HIS GRANDFATHERS FOR THIS!
THIS WAS AN ATTEMPT TO KIDNAP YOU, PLOURR. LAABANN KNEW HE COULDN'T KILL YOU WITHOUT HAVING THE ALLIANCE SIDE AGAINST HIM. BUT WITH YOU IN HIS HANDS HE COULD USE YOU AS A BARGAINING CHIP.
DO YOU SEE, PRINCESS?! YOUR CHOICE IS CLEAR! YOU MUST SIDE WITH PLB AND YOUR BROTHER, HARRAN!
YOU'RE RIGHT, RIAL. I KNOW NOW THAT I CAN'T TRUST THE PRIMS, AND COUNT LAABANN MUST BE DEALT WITH.
IT WOULD SEEM THAT MY ONLY CHOICE IS TO ALLY MYSELF WITH MY BROTHER,
BUT--
--THE LEADER OF THE PLB IS NOT MY BROTHER, HARRAN.

WHAT??
BUT THE TESTS-- IT WAS CONFIRMED! THE TWO OF YOU ARE OF THE SAME BLOODLINE!
HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS, PLOURR?

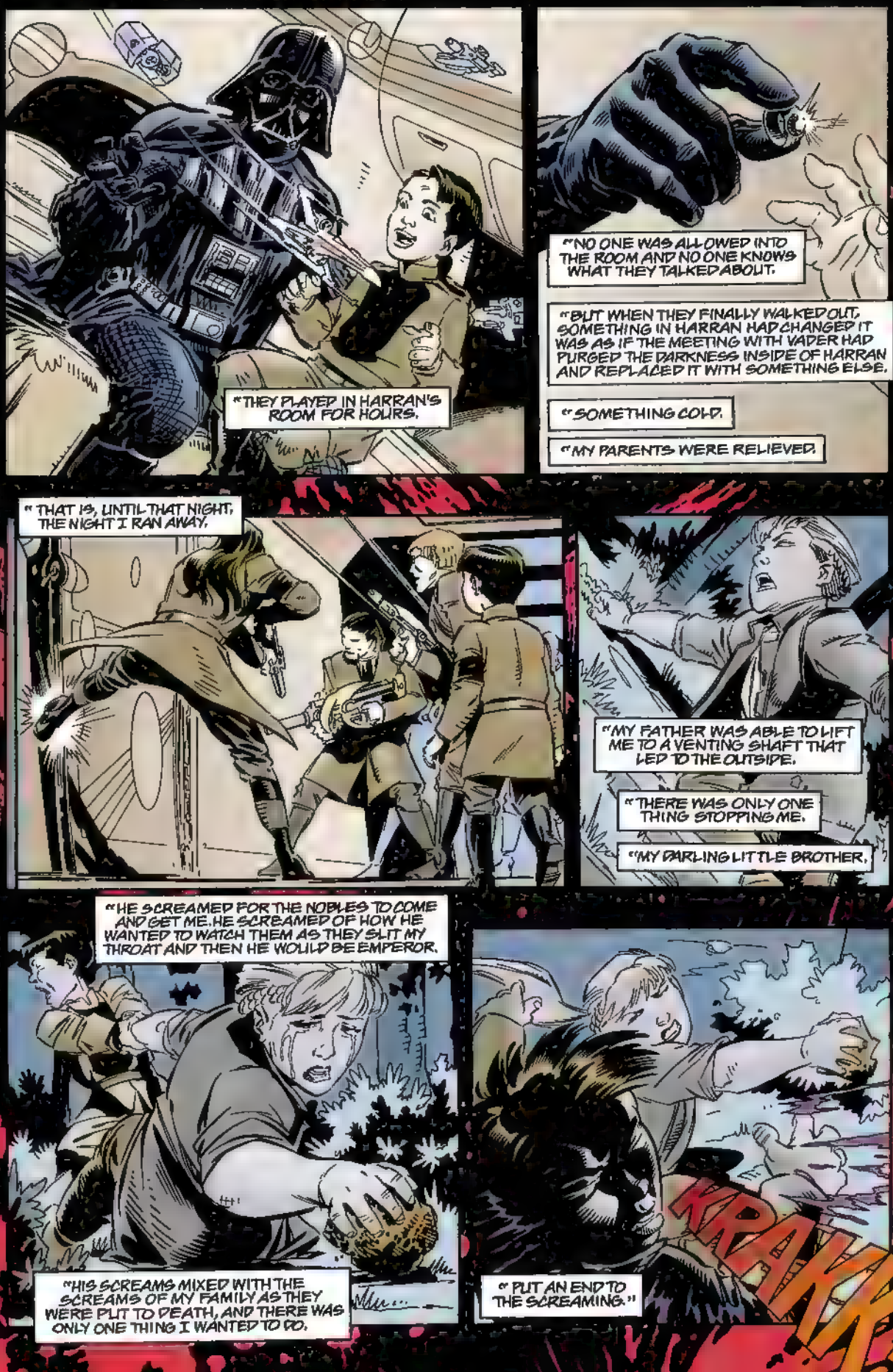
BECAUSE, ON THAT NIGHT... THE NIGHT MY PARENTS AND SISTERS WERE KILLED...

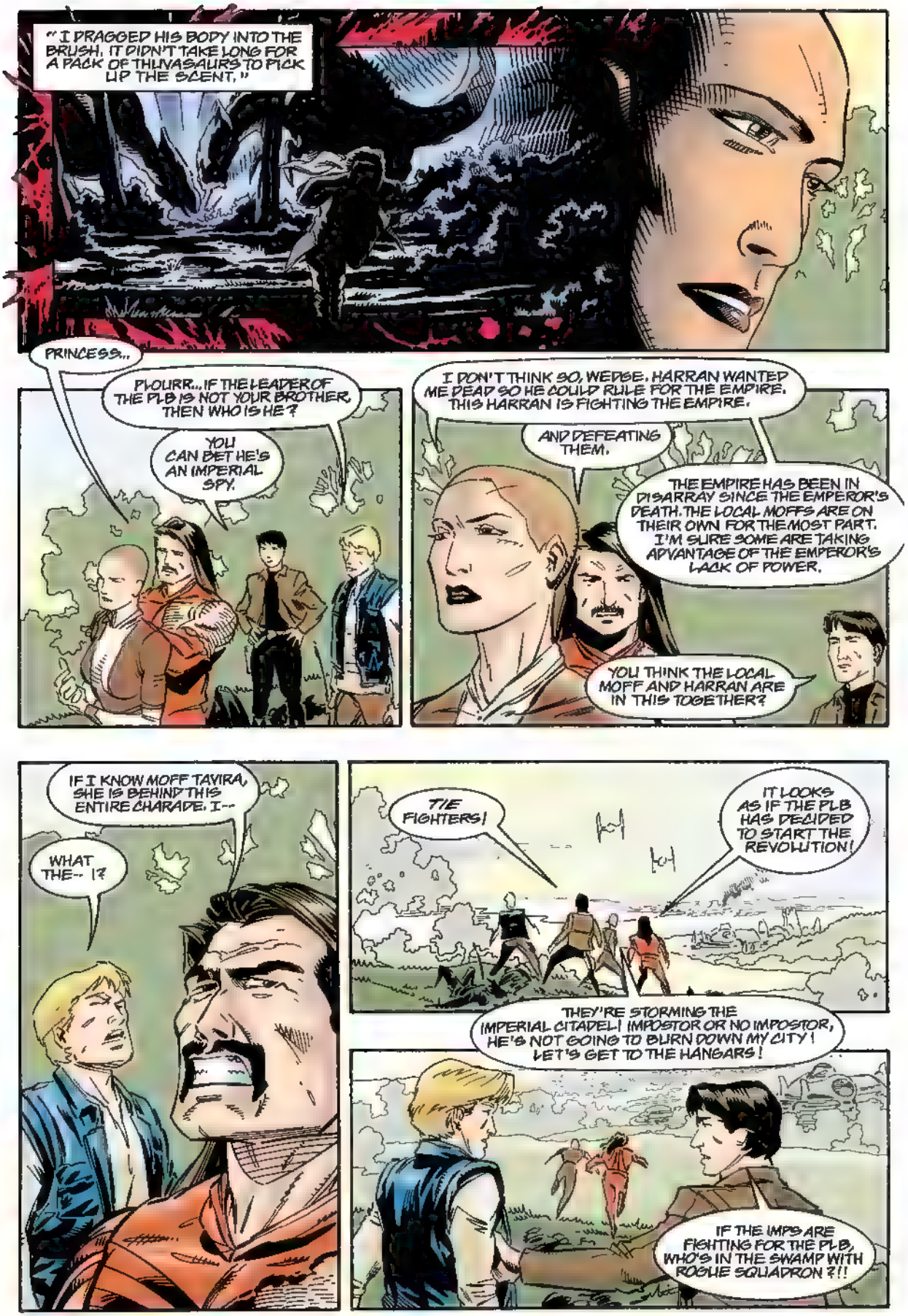

...ON THAT NIGHT, I KILLED MY LITTLE BROTHER, HARRAN, WITH MY OWN HANDS...
...AND I'D DO IT AGAIN.

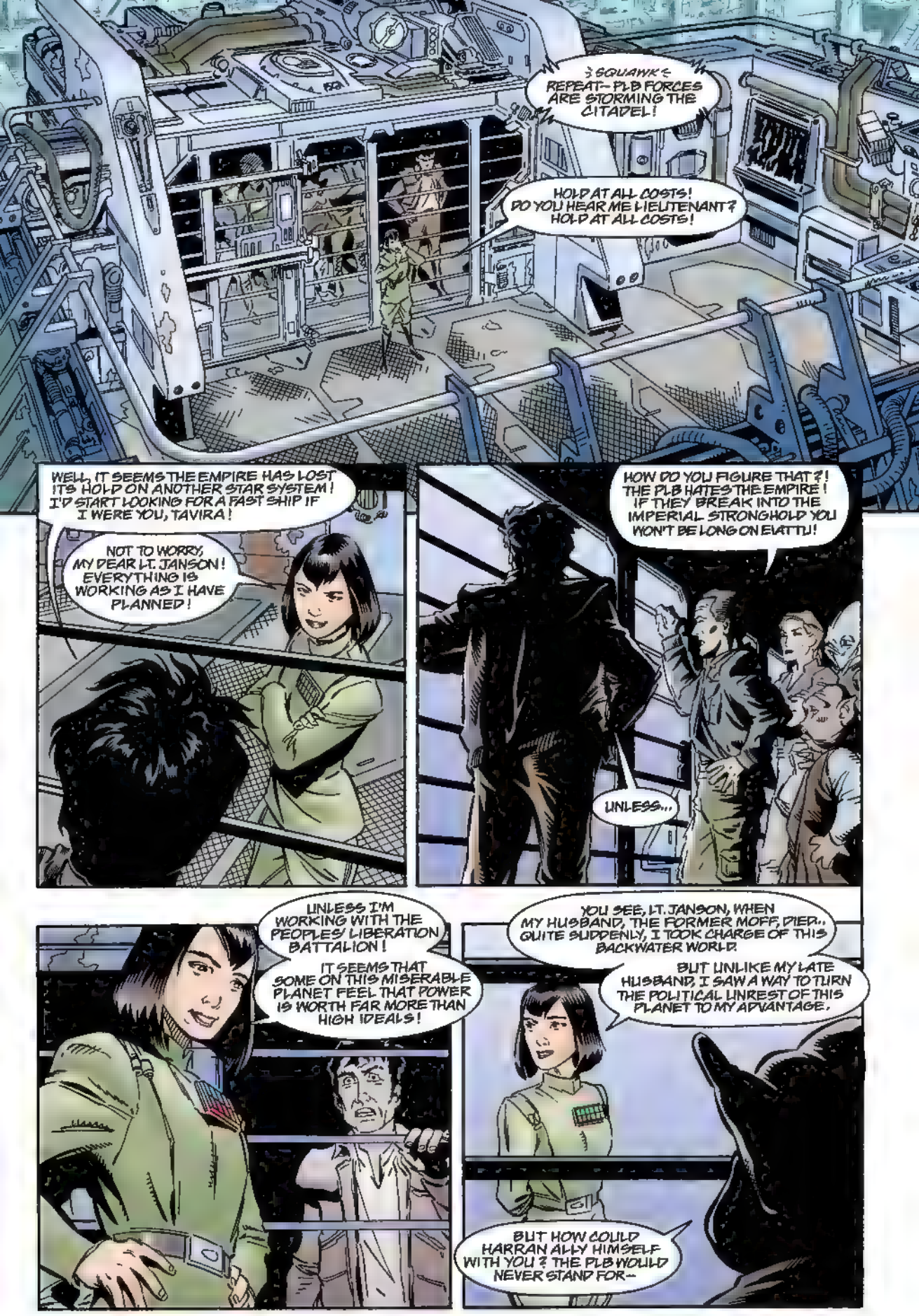
I SAY TO YOU COMRADES, NOW IS THE TIME TO BURN AWAY THE BLIGHT OF THE IMPERIALS AND THE PRIAMSTA!
BURN IT OFF OF THE FACE OF EIATTU WITH THE FLAME OF FREEDOM!
OUR ALLIES IN THE CAPITAL CITY HAVE INFORMED US THAT ALL OF EIATTU'S MATERIAL WEALTH HAS BEEN TRANSPORTED TO THE IMPERIAL CITADEL!
HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN WITHOUT THE ORDER OF THE PRIAMSTA AND THE BLESSING OF MY NEWLY RETURNED SISTER, ISPLOURRDACARTHA!
IT WOULD SEEM THAT MY MISGUIDED SISTER HAS TAKEN TO THE WAYS OF THE PRIAMSTA AND THE NOBLES! THE SAME SITHSPAWN THAT MURDERED OUR FAMILY YEARS AGO!
NOW IS THE TIME FOR ME TO STRIKE AT THE BLACK HEART OF THE PRIAMSTA AND THE IMPERIALS! TO AVENGE MY FAMILY AND RESTORE EIATTU TO HER FORMER GLORY!
WILL YOU HELP ME? WILL YOU HELP ME TO BRING ABOUT MY DREAM OF PEACE?
YES!
LIBERATION!!!
DEATH TO THE PRIAMSTA!!!
HARRAN!
HARRAN!
HARRAN!

...ON THAT NIGHT, I KILLED MY LITTLE BROTHER, HARRAN, WITH MY OWN HANDS--
--AND I'D DO IT AGAIN.
BUT, HOW? WHY?
YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE, SHOULD HAVE SUSPECTED, RIAL. YOU KNEW WHAT PRINCE HARRAN WAS. YOU KNEW THE ROYAL FAMILY'S DIRTY LITTLE SECRET.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, PLOURR?
I MEAN THAT EVEN IN PARADISE, THERE IS ALWAYS THE TOUCH OF EVIL.

"THE BLOOD LINE OF MY FAMILY HAS BEEN KEPT PERFECT FOR OVER TEN GENERATIONS BY THE ROYAL LIFE-ENGINES. EIATTU'S FINEST SCIENTISTS WERE CHARGED WITH ACHIEVING WHAT NATURE COULD NOT...
"...KEEPING THE GENETIC LINE PURE. CLEAR OF ALL THE ILLS THAT PLAGUE THE CITIZENS OF EIATTU. BUT AS YOU KNOW, NATURE ABHORS A VACUUM.
"AND AS SURE AS EIATTU REVOLVES AROUND THE SUN, MY LITTLE BROTHER, PRINCE HARRANDATHA WAS MAD.
"ALL THOSE YEARS OF DIPPING FROM THE SAME GENETIC POOL CAUSED A WRINKLE, A FLAW IN AN OTHERWISE NORMAL FAMILY LINE.
"YET IT WAS NEVER SPOKEN OF ALOUD...ONLY IN THE DARK CORRIDORS OF THE PALACE, GOSSIPED BY KITCHEN MAIDS AND ROYAL PHYSICIANS.
"THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING THAT GAVE MY BROTHER MORE PLEASURE THAN THE SUFFERING OF OTHERS WEAKER THAN HIMSELF.
"THE EMPIRE, AND ITS CHAMPION, DARTH VADER, DARK LORD OF THE SITH.
"I SUPPOSE MY PARENTS SHOULD HAVE EXPECTED IT.
"WE SET OUT TO KEEP OURSELVES ABOVE THE COMMON MAN AND FOUND OURSELVES WITH A THING FROM THE DEEPEST PIT OF THE SITH.
"THE DAY VADER CAME TO EIATTU HIMSELF TO INSPECT THE IMPERIAL GARRISON AND TO VISIT WITH HIS GREATEST ADMIRER, WAS THE HAPPIEST DAY OF MY BROTHER'S LIFE."


"THEY PLAYED IN HARRAN'S ROOM FOR HOURS.
"NO ONE WAS ALLOWED INTO THE ROOM AND NO ONE KNOWS WHAT THEY TALKED ABOUT.
"BUT WHEN THEY FINALLY WALKED OUT, SOMETHING IN HARRAN HAD CHANGED IT WAS AS IF THE MEETING WITH VADER HAD PURGED THE DARKNESS INSIDE OF HARRAN AND REPLACED IT WITH SOMETHING ELSE.
"SOMETHING COLD.
"MY PARENTS WERE RELIEVED.
"THAT IS, UNTIL THAT NIGHT, THE NIGHT I RAN AWAY.
"MY FATHER WAS ABLE TO LIFT ME TO A VENTING SHAFT THAT LED TO THE OUTSIDE.
"THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING STOPPING ME.
"MY DARLING LITTLE BROTHER.
"HE SCREAMED FOR THE NOBLES TO COME AND GET ME. HE SCREAMED OF HOW HE WANTED TO WATCH THEM AS THEY SLIT MY THROAT AND THEN HE WOULD BE EMPEROR.
"HIS SCREAMS MIXED WITH THE SCREAMS OF MY FAMILY AS THEY WERE PUT TO DEATH, AND THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING I WANTED TO DO.
"PUT AN END TO THE SCREAMING."
KRAK!


"I DRAGGED HIS BODY INTO THE BRUSH. IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR A PACK OF THLIVASAURS TO PICK UP THE SCENT."
PRINCESS...
PWOURR... IF THE LEADER OF THE PLB IS NOT YOUR BROTHER, THEN WHO IS HE?
YOU CAN BET HE'S AN IMPERIAL SPY.
I DON'T THINK SO, WEDGE. HARRAN WANTED ME DEAD SO HE COULD RULE FOR THE EMPIRE. THIS HARRAN IS FIGHTING THE EMPIRE.
AND DEFEATING THEM.
THE EMPIRE HAS BEEN IN DISARRAY SINCE THE EMPEROR'S DEATH. THE LOCAL MOFFS ARE ON THEIR OWN FOR THE MOST PART. I'M SURE SOME ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE EMPEROR'S LACK OF POWER.
YOU THINK THE LOCAL MOFF AND HARRAN ARE IN THIS TOGETHER?
IF I KNOW MOFF TAVIRA, SHE IS BEHIND THIS ENTIRE CHARADE. I--
WHAT THE-- !?
TIE FIGHTERS!
IT LOOKS AS IF THE PLB HAS DECIDED TO START THE REVOLUTION!
THEY'RE STORMING THE IMPERIAL CITADEL! IMPOSTOR OR NO IMPOSTOR, HE'S NOT GOING TO BURN DOWN MY CITY! LET'S GET TO THE HANGARS!
IF THE IMPS ARE FIGHTING FOR THE PLB, WHO'S IN THE SWAMP WITH ROGUE SQUADRON ?!!

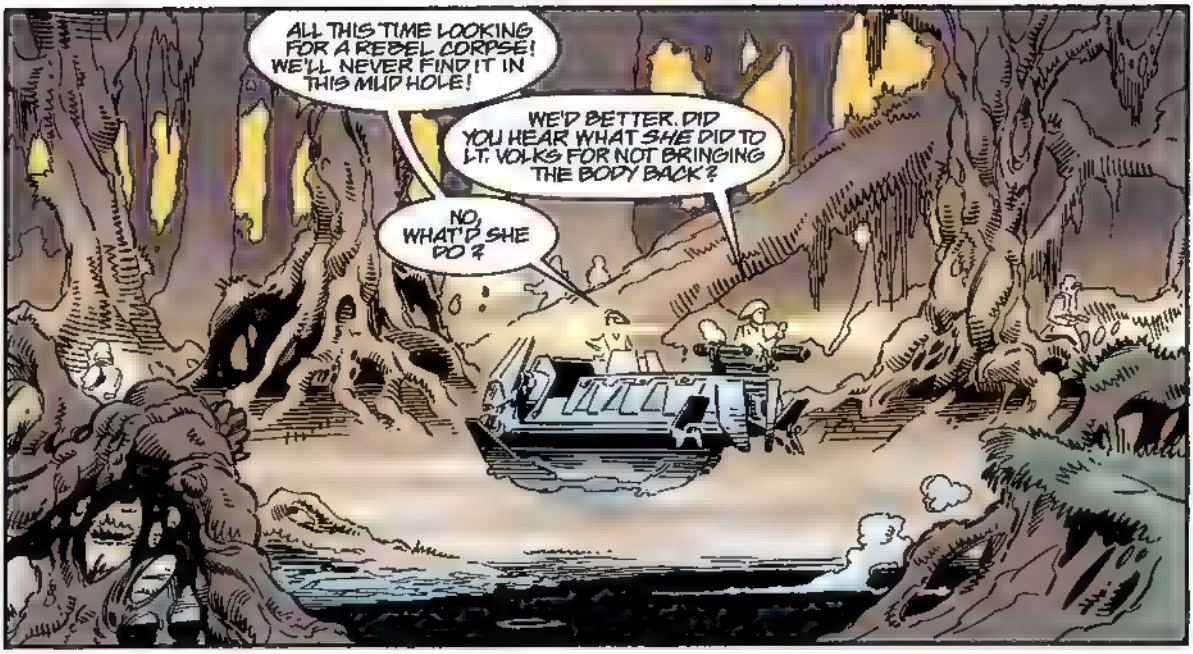

SQUAWK! REPEAT--PLB FORCES ARE STORMING THE CITADEL!
HOLD AT ALL COSTS! DO YOU HEAR ME LIEUTENANT? HOLD AT ALL COSTS!
WELL, IT SEEMS THE EMPIRE HAS LOST ITS HOLD ON ANOTHER STAR SYSTEM! I'D START LOOKING FOR A FAST SHIP IF I WERE YOU, TAVIRA!
NOT TO WORRY, MY DEAR LT. JANSON! EVERYTHING IS WORKING AS I HAVE PLANNED!
HOW DO YOU FIGURE THAT?! THE PLB HATES THE EMPIRE! IF THEY BREAK INTO THE IMPERIAL STRONGHOLD YOU WON'T BE LONG ON EVATTU!
UNLESS...
UNLESS I'M WORKING WITH THE PEOPLES' LIBERATION BATTALION!
IT SEEMS THAT SOME ON THIS MISERABLE PLANET FEEL THAT POWER IS WORTH FAR MORE THAN HIGH IDEALS!
YOU SEE, LT. JANSON, WHEN MY HUSBAND, THE FORMER MOFF, DIED... QUITE SUDDENLY, I TOOK CHARGE OF THIS BACKWATER WORLD.
BUT UNLIKE MY LATE HUSBAND, I SAW A WAY TO TURN THE POLITICAL UNREST OF THIS PLANET TO MY ADVANTAGE.
BUT HOW COULD HARRAN ALLY HIMSELF WITH YOU? THE PLB WOULD NEVER STAND FOR--

--BECAUSE I CONTROL HARRAN ESTILVO, THE LEADER OF THE PLB!
HARRAN IS AN IMPOSTER! AN IMPERIAL PLANT. IT SEEMS THE EMPIRE HAD A SPY FOR YEARS ON EIATTU IN THE TRUE PRINCE HARRAN. WHEN HE DISAPPEARED, THE EMPIRE HAD A BOY IN WAITING TO TAKE HIS PLACE WHEN THE TIME WAS RIGHT.
THIS FALSE HARRAN TRULY BELIEVES THAT HE IS HARRAN. HE HAS ALL OF THE TRUE HARRAN'S MEMORIES. HE BELIEVES IN HIS CAUSE, BUT MORE IN THE POWER THAT THE PLB WILL GIVE HIM.
AND HE TRULY LOVES ME. THE FOOL.
YOU SEE, I FEEL THE EMPIRE IS NOT LONG FOR THIS SYSTEM. I INTEND TO GET WHAT I CAN, WHILE I CAN.
IF HARRAN SUCCEEDS, I CAN LEAVE THIS BACKWARD PLANET TO THE PLB. I HAVE RAIDED ENOUGH CREDITS TO DO ANYTHING, GO ANYWHERE.
OR, I CAN MARRY HARRAN, KILL HIM, AND RULE POOR EIATTU AS HIS WIDOW.
EITHER WAY, I'LL HAVE WHAT I WANT.
THEN WHY DO YOU NEED US?
I DON'T. HOSTAGES, PERHAPS, IF PLANS SHOULD GO AWRY.
BUT THEY WON'T.
AS SOON AS I KNOW THE OUTCOME OF THE BATTLE...
...I'LL KILL YOU ALL.
THIS IS NOT GOOD.
WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE.
NOW THAT'S A GOOD PLAN!

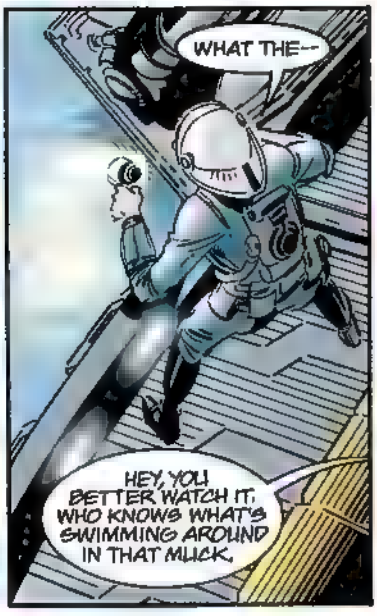
LET'S HIT 'EM HARD!
FOR THE PRIDE OF EIATTU!
KROOM!
NO YOU DON'T, YOU LITTLE--
YRAPP!
YRAPP!
THANK THE STARS!

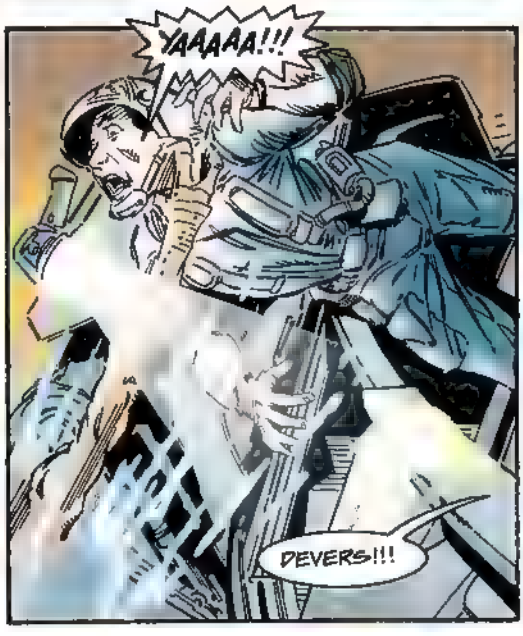
WEDGE, WE'VE GOT TO TAKE OUT THAT TURBOLASER!
I'LL BE--
NO... NOT AGAIN.

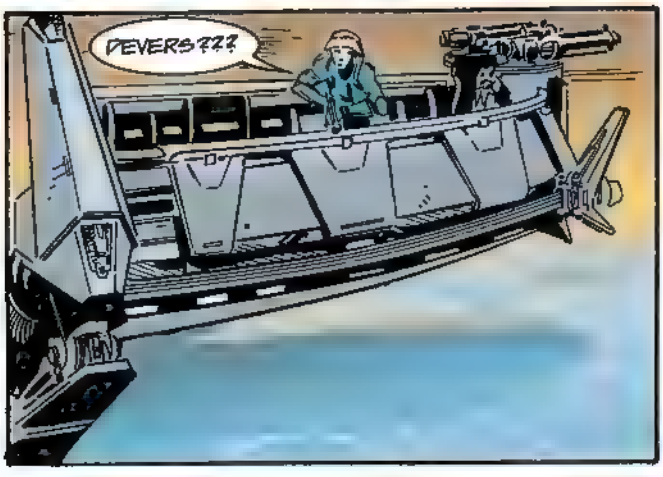
NEVER AGAIN!
VRAPP
VRAPP
WHA--
Whaa! Whooo! NICE WORK, PLOURR!
KA-WHOOM
JUST WANTED TO MAKE IT A FAIR FIGHT!
NOW THEY ONLY HAVE TO GET THROUGH A COMPANY OF STORMTROOPERS!
HEADS UP, PEOPLE! LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT MORE COMPANY!

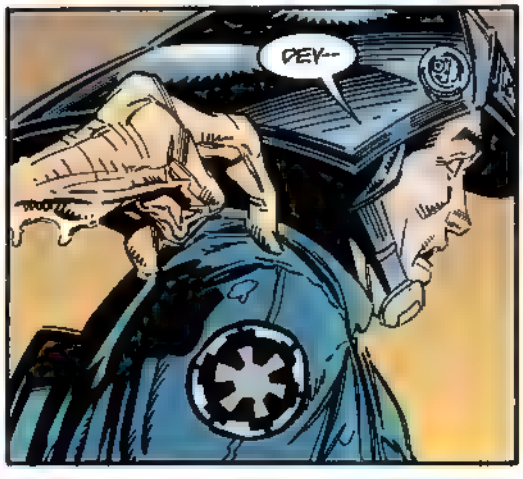

ALL THIS TIME LOOKING FOR A REBEL CORPSE! WE'LL NEVER FIND IT IN THIS MUD HOLE!
WE'D BETTER. DID YOU HEAR WHAT SHE DID TO LT. VOLKS FOR NOT BRINGING THE BODY BACK?
NO, WHAT'D SHE DO?

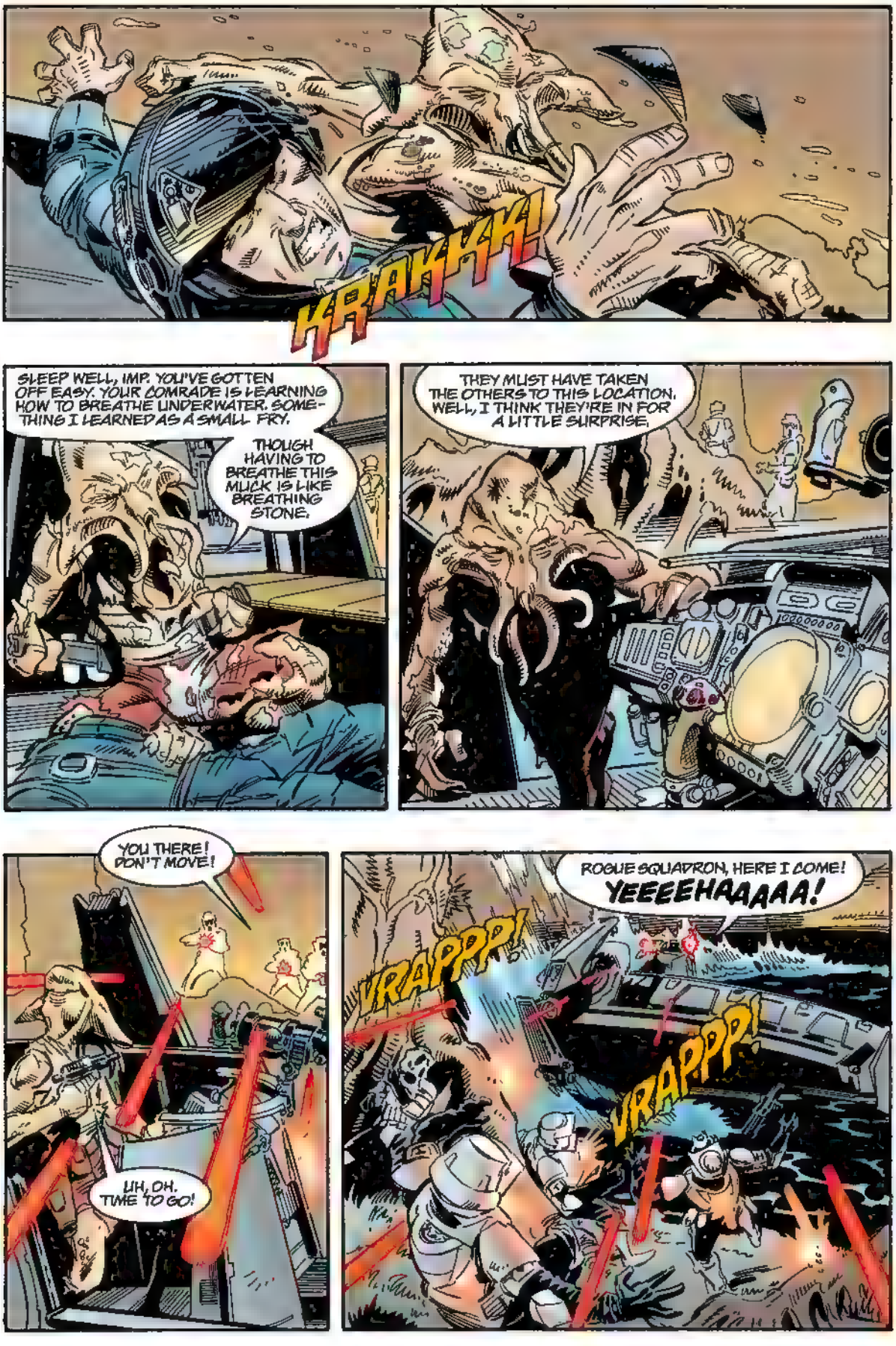
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU CALL IT, BUT IT WASN'T PRETTY.
BLOOPPP BLOPPP... BLIPPP


WHAT THE--
HEY, YOU BETTER WATCH IT. WHO KNOWS WHAT'S SWIMMING AROUND IN THAT MUCK.


YAAAAA!!!
DEVERS!!!

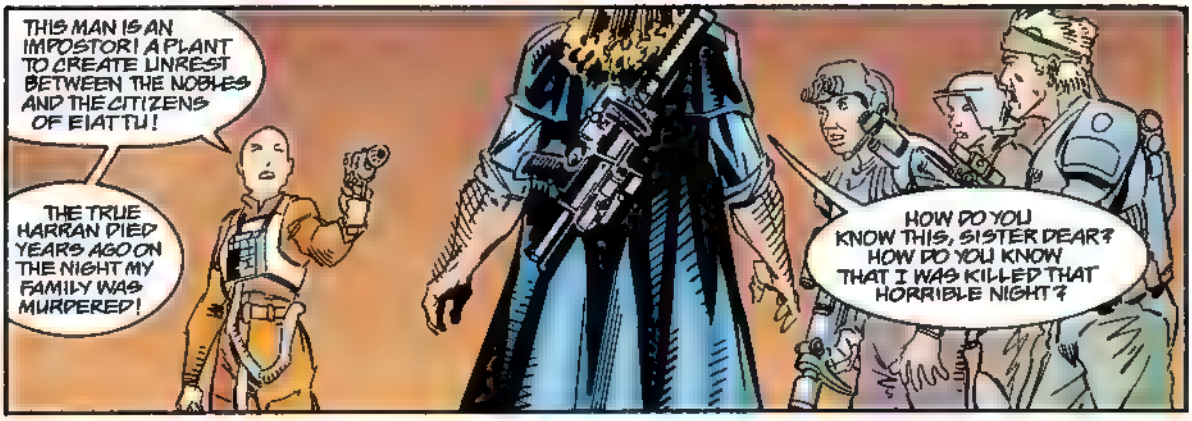

DEVERS???

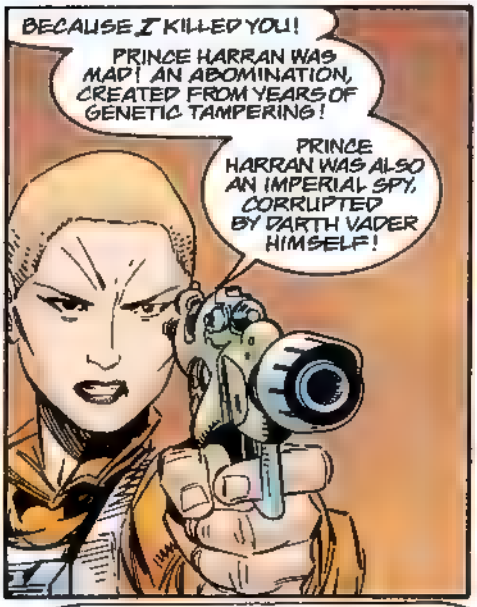

DEV--

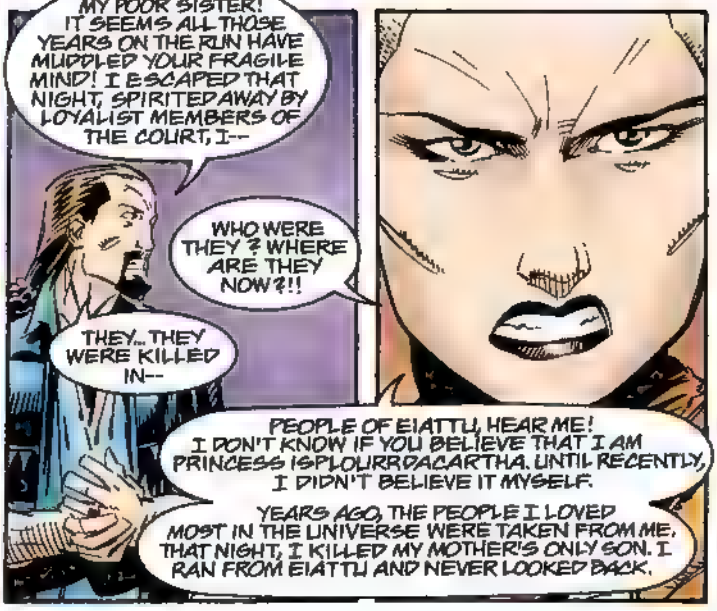

KRAKKK!
SLEEP WELL, IMP. YOU'VE GOTTEN OFF EASY. YOUR COMRADE IS LEARNING HOW TO BREATHE UNDERWATER. SOMETHING I LEARNED AS A SMALL FRY.
THOUGH HAVING TO BREATHE THIS MUCK IS LIKE BREATHING STONE.
THEY MUST HAVE TAKEN THE OTHERS TO THIS LOCATION. WELL, I THINK THEY'RE IN FOR A LITTLE SURPRISE.
YOU THERE! DON'T MOVE!
UH, OH. TIME TO GO!
ROGUE SQUADRON, HERE I COME! YEEEEHAAAAA!
VRAPPP!
VRAPPP!

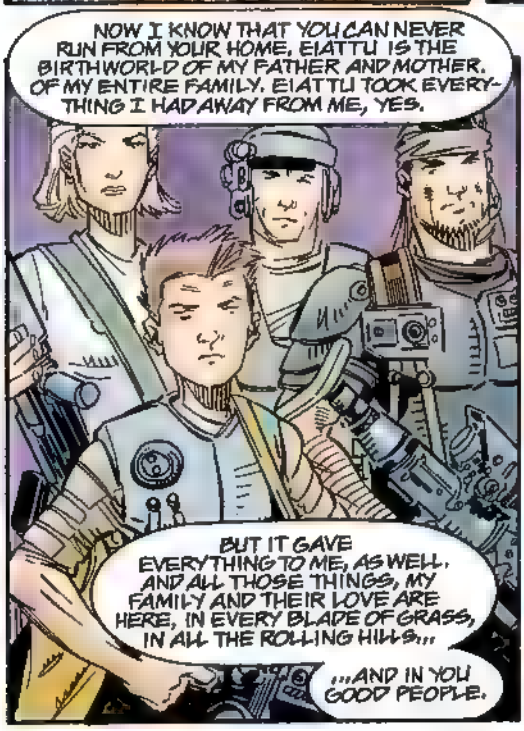
LIBERATION!!!
CHECK THOSE CORNERS! WATCH YOURSELVES, THIS PLACE COULD CAVE IN AT ANY MINUTE!
COMRADES! WE ARE VICTORIOUS!
HURRAHHH!
HURRAHHH!
AH, I SEE OUR NEW ALLIES HAVE COME TO JOIN IN OUR CELEBRATION!

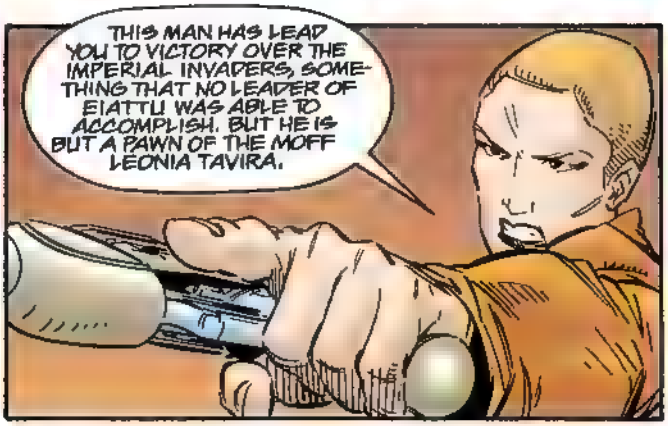
SGT. ASHAAD, HELP THAT PILOT DOWN.
BY THE STARS... IT'S PRINCESS ISPLOURRDACARTHA!
AT LONG LAST, DEAR SISTER.
HURRAHH!
HURRAHH!
SO, YOU'RE THE MAN WHO CLAIMS TO BE MY BROTHER!
DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME, SISTER DEAR? HAS THE MEMORY OF MY BROTHERLY LOVE FADED?
OH, COME ON! I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, BUT YOU'RE DEFINITELY NOT MY BROTHER!
LORD HARRAN, WATCH--
SGT. ASHAAD! THIS IS BETWEEN MY SISTER AND ME! NO ONE IS TO INTERFERE!

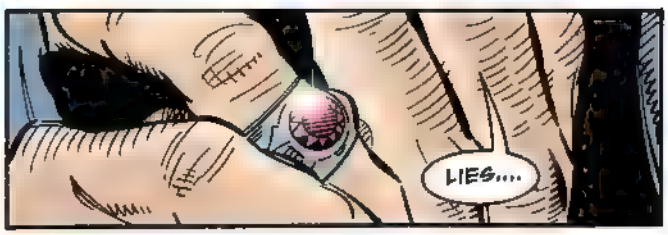

THIS MAN IS AN IMPOSTOR! A PLANT TO CREATE UNREST BETWEEN THE NOBLES AND THE CITIZENS OF EIATTU!
THE TRUE HARRAN DIED YEARS AGO ON THE NIGHT MY FAMILY WAS MURDERED!
HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS, SISTER DEAR? HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT I WAS KILLED THAT HORRIBLE NIGHT?


BECAUSE I KILLED YOU!
PRINCE HARRAN WAS MAD! AN ABOMINATION, CREATED FROM YEARS OF GENETIC TAMPERING!
PRINCE HARRAN WAS ALSO AN IMPERIAL SPY, CORRUPTED BY DARTH VADER HIMSELF!


MY POOR SISTER! IT SEEMS ALL THOSE YEARS ON THE RUN HAVE MUDDLED YOUR FRAGILE MIND! I ESCAPED THAT NIGHT, SPIRITED AWAY BY LOYALIST MEMBERS OF THE COURT, I--
WHO WERE THEY? WHERE ARE THEY NOW?!!
THEY... THEY WERE KILLED IN--
PEOPLE OF EIATTU, HEAR ME! I DON'T KNOW IF YOU BELIEVE THAT I AM PRINCESS ISPLOURRDACARTHA. UNTIL RECENTLY, I DIDN'T BELIEVE IT MYSELF.
YEARS AGO, THE PEOPLE I LOVED MOST IN THE UNIVERSE WERE TAKEN FROM ME. THAT NIGHT, I KILLED MY MOTHER'S ONLY SON. I RAN FROM EIATTU AND NEVER LOOKED BACK.


NOW I KNOW THAT YOU CAN NEVER RUN FROM YOUR HOME. EIATTU IS THE BIRTHWORLD OF MY FATHER AND MOTHER. OF MY ENTIRE FAMILY. EIATTU TOOK EVERYTHING I HAD AWAY FROM ME, YES.
BUT IT GAVE EVERYTHING TO ME, AS WELL. AND ALL THOSE THINGS, MY FAMILY AND THEIR LOVE ARE HERE, IN EVERY BLADE OF GRASS, IN ALL THE ROLLING HILLS...
...AND IN YOU GOOD PEOPLE.

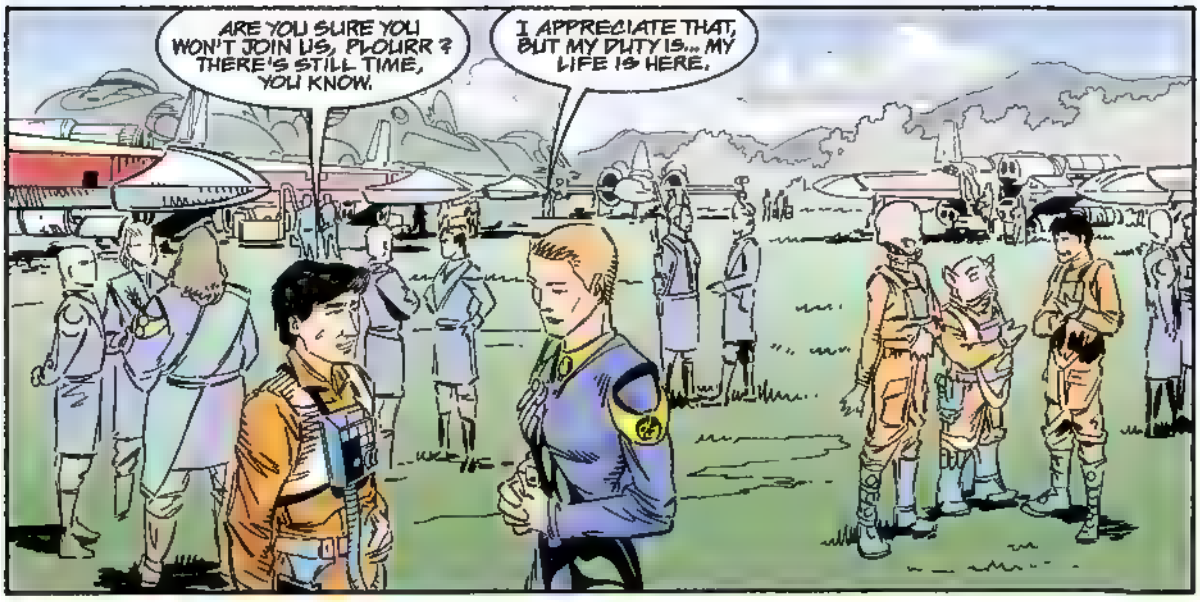

THIS MAN HAS LEAD YOU TO VICTORY OVER THE IMPERIAL INVADERS, SOMETHING THAT NO LEADER OF EIATTU WAS ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH. BUT HE IS BUT A PAWN OF THE MOFF LEONIA TAVIRA.

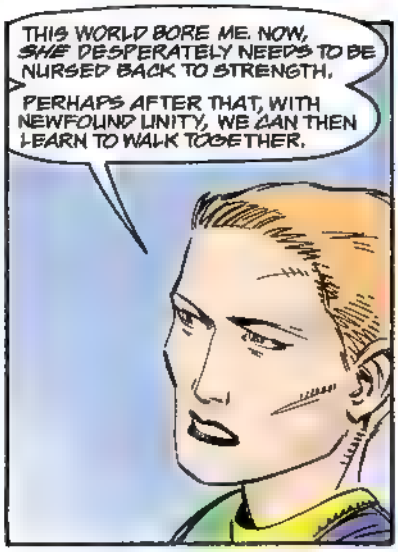

LIES....

LIES!! I CAME BACK TO THIS PLANET TO SAVE MY PEOPLE FROM THE OPPRESSION OF THE NOBLES! TO BRING ABOUT A NEW AGE TO OUR WORLD.
WHAT HAS SHE DONE BUT CODDLE THE PRIAMSTA AND THE IMPERIALS!
I LED YOU PEOPLE TO VICTORY! I--
--I ALMOST WISH THAT YOU WERE MY BROTHER, AT LEAST THEN I WOULD NOT HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE GUILT I'VE CARRIED ALL THESE YEARS.
BUT YOU'RE NOT MY BROTHER. YOU'RE A LIE, A FALSE HOPE TO A HELPLESS PEOPLE.
ONCE WE HAVE MOFF TAVIRA IN CUSTODY, WE CAN GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS AND FIND OUT JUST WHO YOU ARE.
GET BACK! SGT. ASHAAD, STOP HER!
B-BUT, MY LORD...
YOU SEE, THESE PEOPLE DON'T NEED US.
THIS IS THE STRENGTH OF EIATTU, NOT ITS LEADERS. ITS STRENGTH LIES IN ITS PEOPLE.
I SAID STAY BACK!!! STOP HER!!!
I-I AM PRINCE HARRAN ESTILLO! I-I-LEADER OF THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION BATTALION!!! I-I--
AND THAT RING, "BROTHER DEAR," JUST ISN'T YOU!

I SAID STAY BACK!!!
VRAPP!
COMRADE, NO--
VRAPP!
AAARGGG!!
...gggrrrgglllgg... LEONIA... ggrrrgglleee... help me...
...gggrrrllggg...
IT'S TRUE! HE WAS AN IMPOSTOR!
PLOURR!!!

PLOURR, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YES, RIAL. I'M FINE.
WE VAPED THE LAST OF THE TIES. THE CITADEL IS SECURE.
SO, THIS IS THE WOULD-BE PRINCE.
WEDGE, HAVE YOU HEARD FROM JANSON AND THE OTHERS?
I JUST GOT WORD FROM HIM. HE AND THE REST OF ROGUE SQUADRON WERE THE UNWILLING GUESTS OF THE MOFF.
"JANSON TOLD ME THAT THEY MANAGED TO ESCAPE WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM NRIN. IT SEEMS THAT MOFF TAVIRA WAS ABLE TO ESCAPE WITH ONLY A PORTION OF THE ROYAL FUNDS SHE HAD STOLEN.
"THEY WERE ABLE TO RESCUE THE REST OF IT AND ARE WAITING FOR YOU TO SEND A TRANSPORT TO THEIR LOCATION."
WHAT ABOUT HIM?
AND WHAT ABOUT THE PLO? WHAT ABOUT COUNT LAABANN AND THE PRIAMSTA? WHO WILL RULE ELATTU?
WE'LL CARE FOR HIM THE BEST WE CAN, UNTIL WE CAN FIND OUT JUST WHAT WAS DONE TO HIM.
AND AS FOR THE REST...

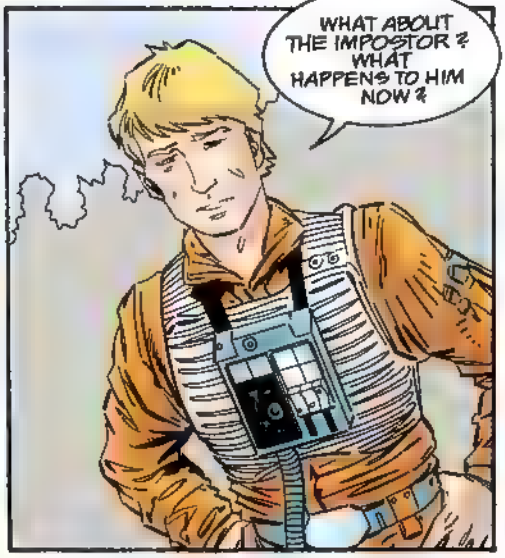

ARE YOU SURE YOU WON'T JOIN US, PLOURR? THERE'S STILL TIME, YOU KNOW.
I APPRECIATE THAT, BUT MY DUTY IS... MY LIFE IS HERE.


THIS WORLD BORE ME. NOW, SHE DESPERATELY NEEDS TO BE NURSED BACK TO STRENGTH.
PERHAPS AFTER THAT, WITH NEWFOUND UNITY, WE CAN THEN LEARN TO WALK TOGETHER.

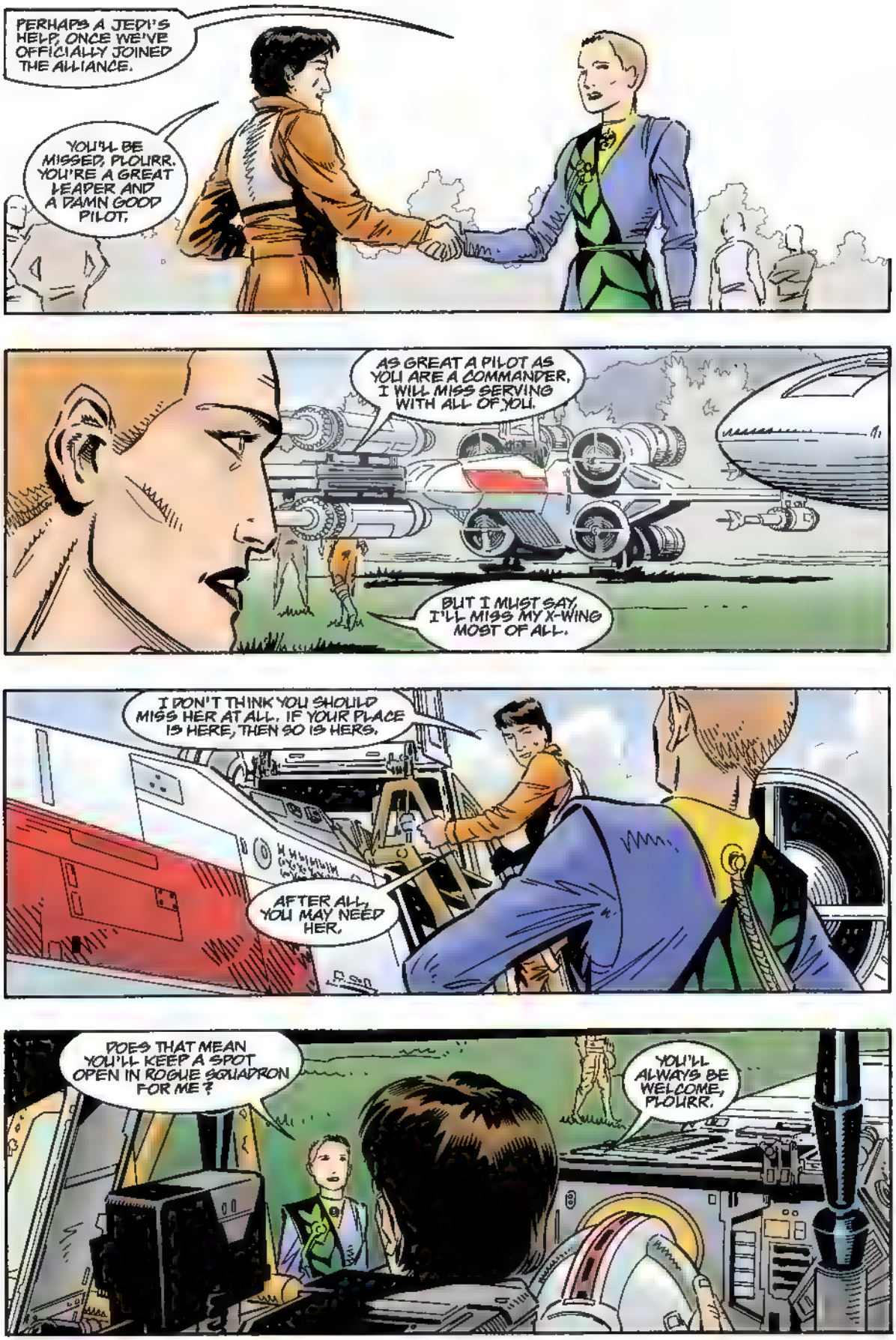
"REGARDLESS OF WHERE THOSE STEPS MAY TAKE US, THE ACTIONS OF CERTAIN PARTIES WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN."

EVEN THOUGH MOFF TAVIRA GOT AWAY WITH A FAIR AMOUNT OF IMPERIAL BULLION, WE'LL DO OUR BEST TO TRACK HER DOWN FOR YOU--

NO NEED TO CONCERN YOURSELF WITH THAT. THE MAJORITY OF THE FUNDS ARE STILL IN MY POSSESSION.


WHAT ABOUT THE IMPOSTOR? WHAT HAPPENS TO HIM NOW?

THE POOR SOUL...
"WHATEVER MIND HE MAY HAVE POSSESSED BEFORE, EITHER HARRAN'S OR HIS OWN...
"...IS GONE NOW."
AS FAR AS OUR RESEARCHERS CAN DETERMINE, THE RING HE WORE WAS SOME KIND OF BRAIN-PROGRAMMING DEVICE.
CONTACT WITH IT SOMEHOW REINFORCED THE REAL HARRAN'S MEMORIES THAT HAD BEEN IMPLANTED INTO HIS MIND.
THE VERY IDEA OF SUCH A DEVICE IS UNMISTAKABLY VADER.
DESTROYING THE DEVICE AS I DID MAY HAVE ERASED HIS MIND, BUT AT LEAST HE IS FREE OF THE EMPIRE'S INFLUENCE.
OUR PHYSICIANS WILL CARE FOR HIM AS BEST THEY CAN.

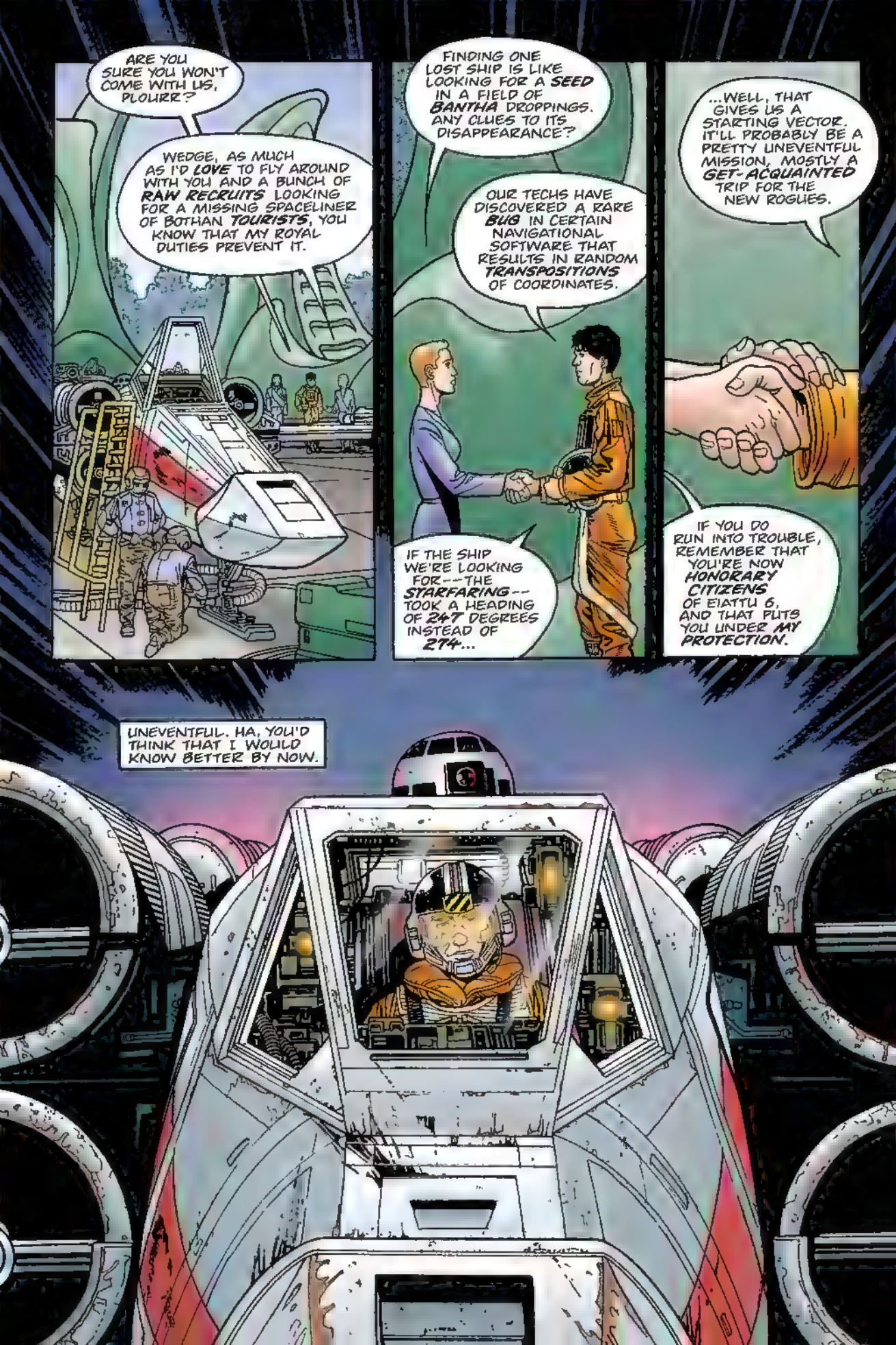

PERHAPS A JEDI'S HELP, ONCE WE'VE OFFICIALLY JOINED THE ALLIANCE.
YOU'LL BE MISSED, PLOURR. YOU'RE A GREAT LEADER AND A DAMN GOOD PILOT.
AS GREAT A PILOT AS YOU ARE A COMMANDER, I WILL MISS SERVING WITH ALL OF YOU.
BUT I MUST SAY, I'LL MISS MY X-WING MOST OF ALL.
I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD MISS HER AT ALL. IF YOUR PLACE IS HERE, THEN SO IS HERS.
AFTER ALL, YOU MAY NEED HER.
DOES THAT MEAN YOU'LL KEEP A SPOT OPEN IN ROGUE SQUADRON FOR ME?
YOU'LL ALWAYS BE WELCOME, PLOURR.

"YOU'VE SAVED YOUR WORLD. WHEN YOU'RE READY, COME BACK AND SAVE THE REST OF US."

Requiem for a Rogue | illustration by Stuart Hiner

Approximately eight months after the Battle of Endor . . .

art by Gary Ers


ARE YOU SURE YOU WON'T COME WITH US, PLOURR?
WEDGE, AS MUCH AS I'D LOVE TO FLY AROUND WITH YOU AND A BUNCH OF RAW RECRUITS LOOKING FOR A MISSING SPACELINER OF BOTHAN TOURISTS, YOU KNOW THAT MY ROYAL DUTIES PREVENT IT.
FINDING ONE LOST SHIP IS LIKE LOOKING FOR A SEED IN A FIELD OF BANTHA DROPPINGS. ANY CLUES TO ITS DISAPPEARANCE?
OUR TECHS HAVE DISCOVERED A RARE BUG IN CERTAIN NAVIGATIONAL SOFTWARE THAT RESULTS IN RANDOM TRANSPOSITIONS OF COORDINATES.
IF THE SHIP WE'RE LOOKING FOR--THE STARFARING--TOOK A HEADING OF 247 DEGREES INSTEAD OF 274...
...WELL, THAT GIVES US A STARTING VECTOR. IT'LL PROBABLY BE A PRETTY UNEVENTFUL MISSION, MOSTLY A GET-ACQUAINTED TRIP FOR THE NEW ROGUES.
IF YOU DO RUN INTO TROUBLE, REMEMBER THAT YOU'RE NOW HONORARY CITIZENS OF EIATTU 6, AND THAT PUTS YOU UNDER MY PROTECTION.
UNEVENTFUL. HA, YOU'D THINK THAT I WOULD KNOW BETTER BY NOW.

CAPTAIN WEDGE ANTILLES HOMEWORLD: CORELLIA.

LT. WES JANSON HOMEWORLD TAANAB

LT. TYCHO CELCHU HOMEWORLD: ALDERAAN

DEREK "HOBBIE" KLIVAN HOMEWORLD: RALLTIIR

DLLR NEP HOMEWORLD: SULLUST

FEYLIS ARDELE HOMEWORLD: COMMENOR

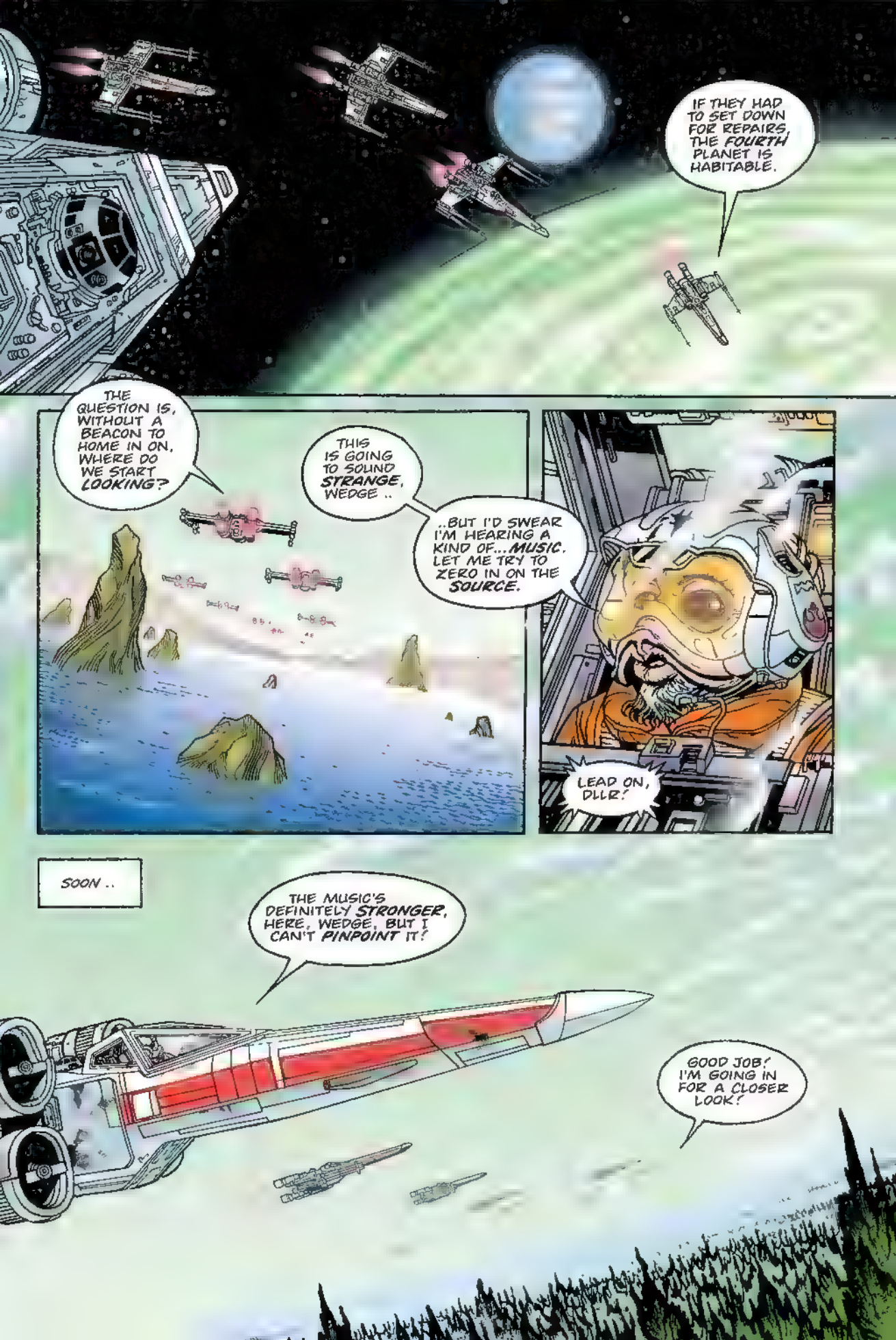
IBTISAM HOMEWORLD: MON CALAMARI

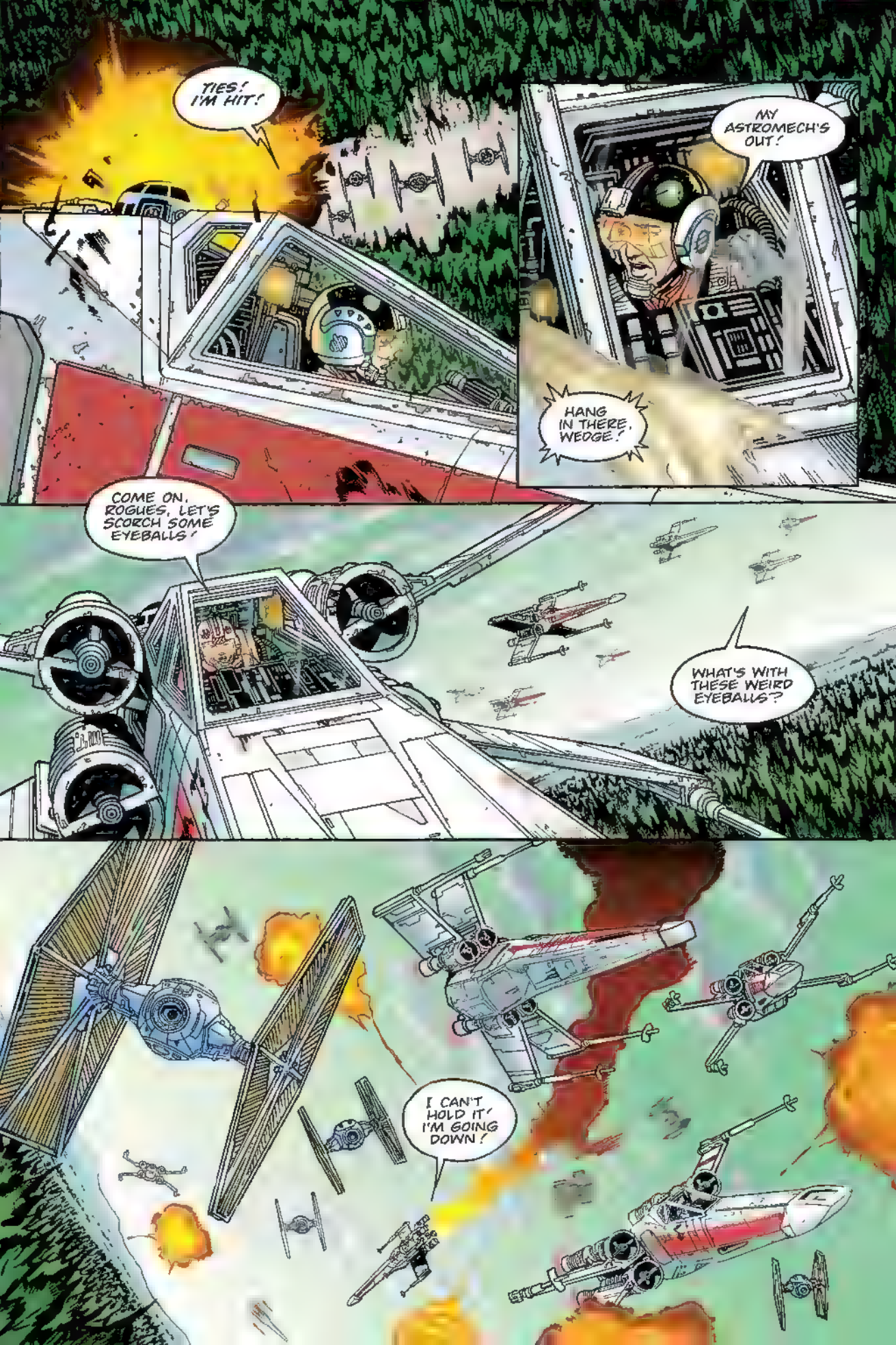
HERIAN I'NGRE HOMEWORLD: CLAK'DOR 4

NRIN YAKIL HOMEWORLD MON CALAMARI

IF OUR SIMULATION OF THE FAULTY NAVDATA IS CORRECT, THE *STARFARING* WOULD HAVE EXITED HYPERSPACE EXACTLY HERE, IN THE *MALREV SYSTEM*.

ERSKINE


IF THEY HAD TO SET DOWN FOR REPAIRS, THE FOURTH PLANET IS HABITABLE.
THE QUESTION IS, WITHOUT A BEACON TO HOME IN ON, WHERE DO WE START LOOKING?
THIS IS GOING TO SOUND STRANGE, WEDGE ..
..BUT I'D SWEAR I'M HEARING A KIND OF... MUSIC. LET ME TRY TO ZERO IN ON THE SOURCE.
LEAD ON, DLLR!
SOON ..
THE MUSIC'S DEFINITELY STRONGER, HERE, WEDGE, BUT I CAN'T PINPOINT IT!
GOOD JOB! I'M GOING IN FOR A CLOSER LOOK!


TIES! I'M HIT!
MY ASTROMECH'S OUT!
HANG IN THERE, WEDGE!
COME ON, ROGUES, LET'S SCORCH SOME EYEBALLS!
WHAT'S WITH THESE WEIRD EYEBALLS?
I CAN'T HOLD IT, I'M GOING DOWN!

WEDGE! WEDGE! COME IN!
DAMN IT, WEDGE! SPEAK TO ME!
WEDGE!
TYCHO! EYEBALL ON YOUR TAIL!
SOMETHING GOT HIM, BUT I CAN'T SEE WHAT!
TURBOLASER FROM THE GROUND, TYCHO! WE'VE GOT FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES!

THE SKIES ARE BLIND! DLLR--CAN YOU SPOT WEDGE?
WE'LL HAVE TO GO IN ON FOOT, BUT FROM THE LOOKS OF THINGS...
DON'T SAY IT, DLLR!
THERE'S A CLEARING ABOUT TWO KLICKS FROM THE CRASH SITE! WE'LL LAUNCH A SEARCH PARTY FROM THERE!
AND FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH...

...I THINK WE'VE FOUND OUR MISSING SPACELINER!
WHAT DO WE TELL THEM OF OUR MISSION, GIROV?
ALL THEY NEED TO KNOW--- NOTHING!
I UNDERSTAND YOUR EAGERNESS TO FIND THE BODY OF YOUR CAPTAIN, BUT---
CAPTAIN ANTILLES MAY STILL BE ALIVE, GIROV. I'D RATHER YOU DIDN'T REFER TO HIM AS A CORPSE.
YES. OF COURSE WHATEVER THE CASE..
...WE'LL BEGIN THE SEARCH TOMORROW AT FIRST LIGHT. WE CAN DO NOTHING UNTIL THEN. GET SOME SLEEP, LIEUTENANT
YOU SAY THE STARFARING SUFFERED CATASTROPHIC SYSTEM FAILURES AS YOU LEFT HYPERSPACE, GIROV...
...WITH YOUR PERMISSION, I'LL TAKE A LOOK. THERE'S A CHANCE I CAN PATCH TOGETHER A FIX.
I'D APPRECIATE THE EXPERTISE OF A BITH. OUR OWN ENGINEERS WERE AMONG OUR FIRST CASUALTIES.

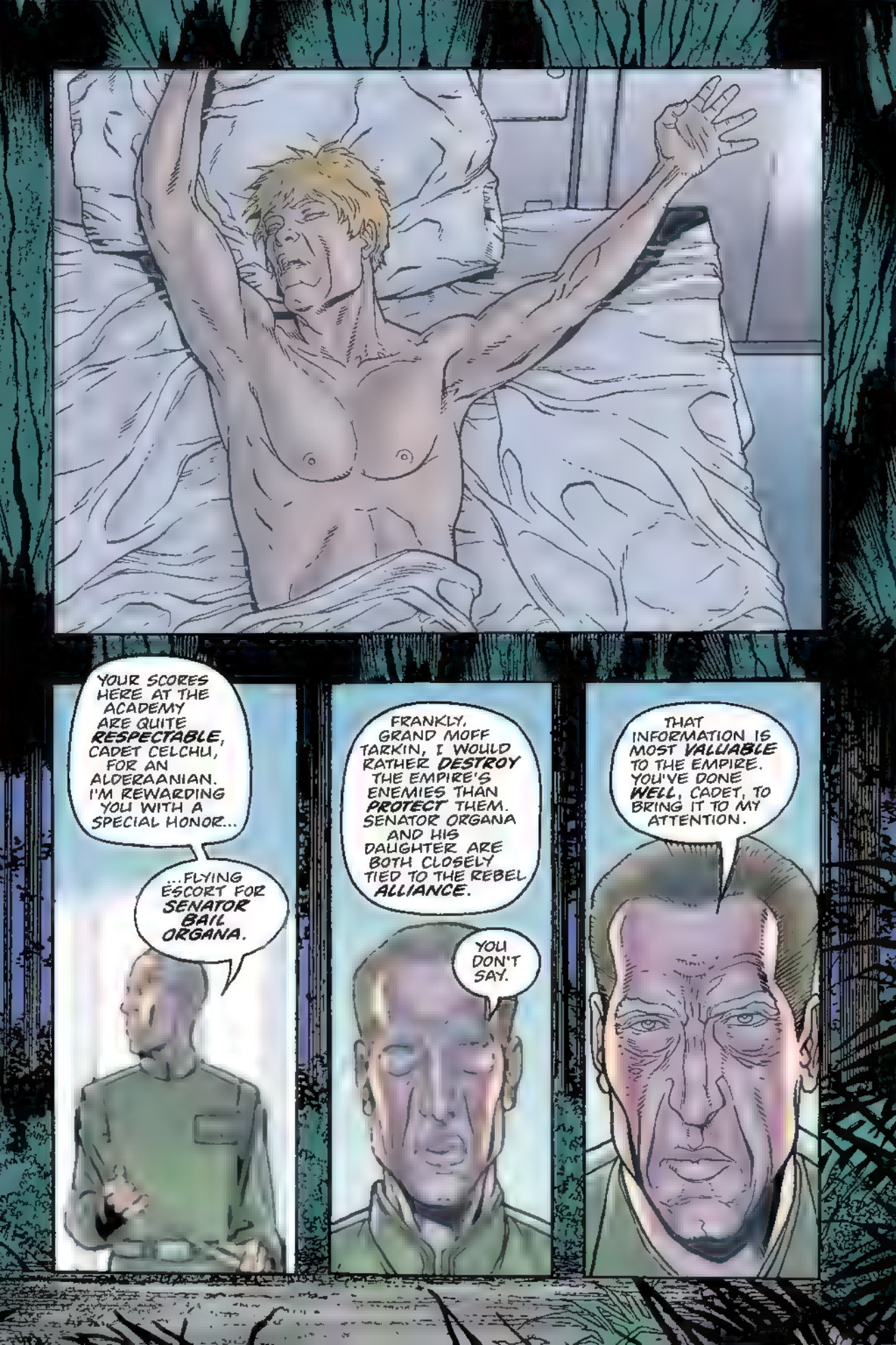
BUT GIROV STILL DIDN'T SAY EXACTLY WHAT KILLED SUCH A LARGE PORTION OF THE PASSENGERS AND CREW?
JUST "THE BEASTS." HE THINKS WE'LL BE OKAY IF WE DON'T LEAVE CAMP.
I'LL BE HAPPY TO PUT THIS PLANET BEHIND ME, I ASSURE YOU
NOT ME THIS WORLD MAKES A MUSIC ALL ITS OWN. LOVELY... LOVELY...
IN OTHER WORDS, YOU'RE EXPERIENCING AN EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO A SUBLIMINAL VIBRATORY STIMULUS.
LET ME GUESS, HERIAN-- YOU DON'T READ MUCH POETRY.
THEN AGAIN, IT COULD JUST BE THAT LIVE WIRE YOU'RE STANDING ON.

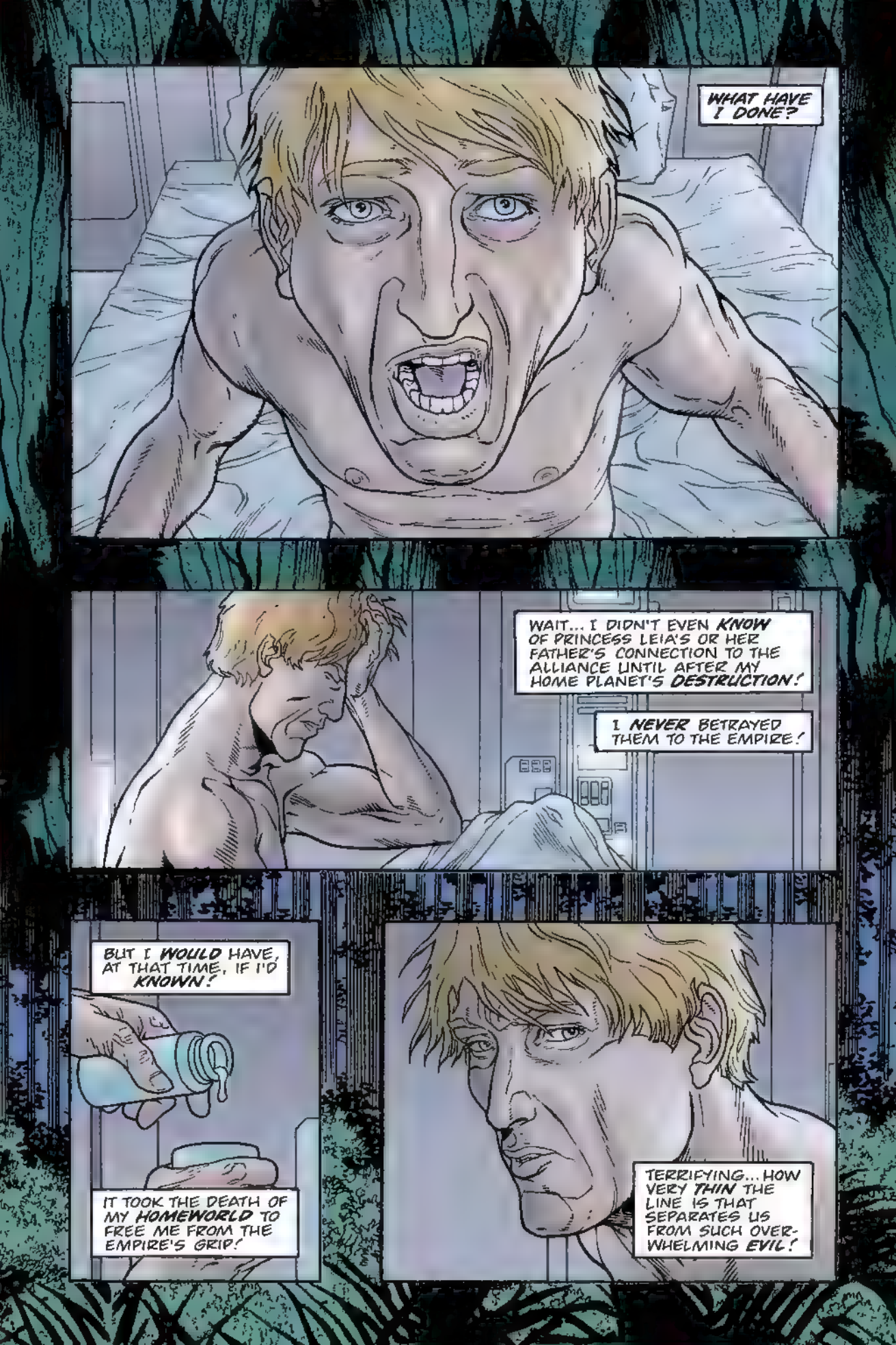
HOW CAN EITHER OF YOU EVEN THINK ABOUT WOMEN WITH YOUR CAPTAIN LOST IN THE JUNGLE... INJURED... DEAD, OR DYING?
I DON'T KNOW, FEYLIS, BUT CAN'T YOU FEEL IT IN THE AIR? A KIND OF... ENERGY!
SOMETHING'S EXERTING AN INFLUENCE ON US! INTELLECTUALLY I KNOW I SHOULDN'T BE ENJOYING MYSELF... BUT I AM!
HM TOO BAD THE BOTHAN MALES DON'T SHARE YOUR ENTHUSIASM.
UNLESS I MISREAD THOSE LOOKS, I'D SAY THAT JEALOUSY HAS REARED ITS UGLY, GREEN HEAD!

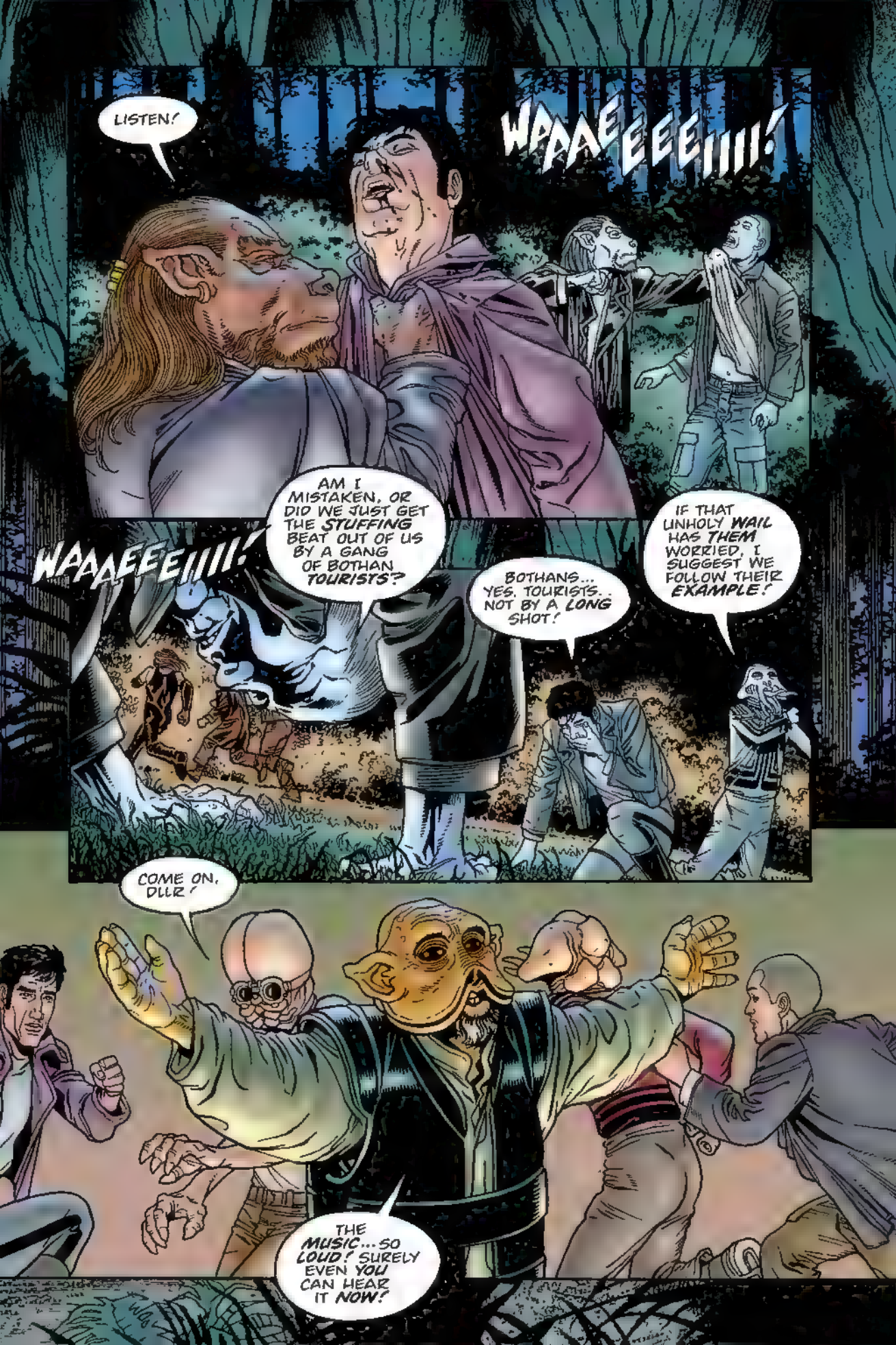
WHAT'S THE MATTER, NRIN? IS YOUR QUARREN SELF-CONTROL SLIPPING? IF YOU AREN'T CAREFUL, YOU MIGHT HAVE SOME FUN!
TO EACH SPECIES, ITS OWN ANYTHING ELSE IS DEBAUCHERY.
ENOUGH! YOUR ATTENTIONS ARE UNWANTED!

WHO SAID YOU COULD CONSORT WITH OUR WOMEN, SQUIDHEAD?
I WAS NOT "CONSORTING." YOUR SPECIES IS NOT...TO MY TASTE.
IN FACT, I FIND IT PECULIAR THAT THEY WOULD TURN SO EAGERLY TO A STRANGER...
...UNLESS THEIR OWN MEN WERE TRAGICALLY DEFICIENT!
WE'LL SEE WHO'S DEFICIENT, QUARREN!
LOOK! SOMEONE'S MADE THE MISTAKE OF PICKING A FIGHT WITH A ROGUE!
LET'S EVEN THOSE ODDS!

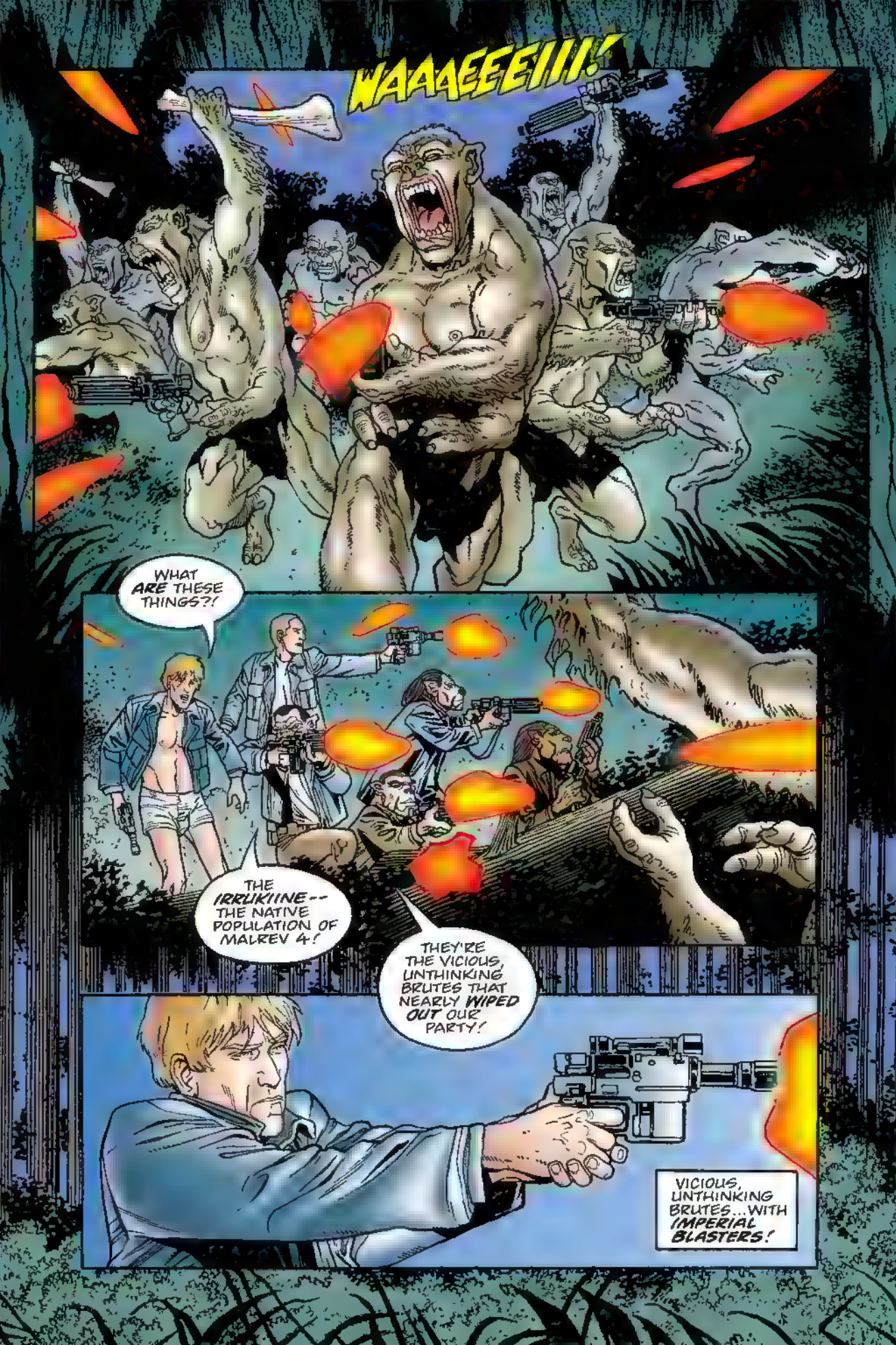
GNN!
WHUUF!
UGHN!


YOUR SCORES HERE AT THE ACADEMY ARE QUITE RESPECTABLE, CADET CELCHU, FOR AN ALDERAANIAN. I'M REWARDING YOU WITH A SPECIAL HONOR...
...FLYING ESCORT FOR SENATOR BAIL ORGANA.
FRANKLY, GRAND MOFF TARKIN, I WOULD RATHER DESTROY THE EMPIRE'S ENEMIES THAN PROTECT THEM. SENATOR ORGANA AND HIS DAUGHTER ARE BOTH CLOSELY TIED TO THE REBEL ALLIANCE.
YOU DON'T SAY.
THAT INFORMATION IS MOST VALUABLE TO THE EMPIRE. YOU'VE DONE WELL, CADET, TO BRING IT TO MY ATTENTION.


WHAT HAVE I DONE?
WAIT... I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW OF PRINCESS LEIA'S OR HER FATHER'S CONNECTION TO THE ALLIANCE UNTIL AFTER MY HOME PLANET'S DESTRUCTION!
I NEVER BETRAYED THEM TO THE EMPIRE!
BUT I WOULD HAVE, AT THAT TIME, IF I'D KNOWN!
IT TOOK THE DEATH OF MY HOMEWORLD TO FREE ME FROM THE EMPIRE'S GRIP!
TERRIFYING... HOW VERY THIN THE LINE IS THAT SEPARATES US FROM SUCH OVERWHELMING EVIL!


LISTEN!
WAAAEEEEEE!!!!
WAAAEEEEE!!!!
AM I MISTAKEN, OR DID WE JUST GET THE STUFFING BEAT OUT OF US BY A GANG OF BOTHAN TOURISTS?
BOTHANS... YES, TOURISTS... NOT BY A LONG SHOT!
IF THAT UNHOLY WAIL HAS THEM WORRIED, I SUGGEST WE FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE!
COME ON, DLLR!
THE MUSIC... SO LOUD! SURELY EVEN YOU CAN HEAR IT NOW!

ALL I HEAR IS A VOICE IN MY HEAD SAYING... GET INSIDE THE DAMN SHIP!
WHAT IS IT?
I HOPE YOU KNOW HOW TO USE ONE OF THESE.
THE BEASTS ARE ATTACKING!


WAAAEEE!!!
WHAT ARE THESE THINGS?!
THE IRRUKIINE-- THE NATIVE POPULATION OF MALREV 4!
THEY'RE THE VICIOUS, UNTHINKING BRUTES THAT NEARLY WIPED OUT OUR PARTY!
VICIOUS, UNTHINKING BRUTES...WITH IMPERIAL BLASTERS!

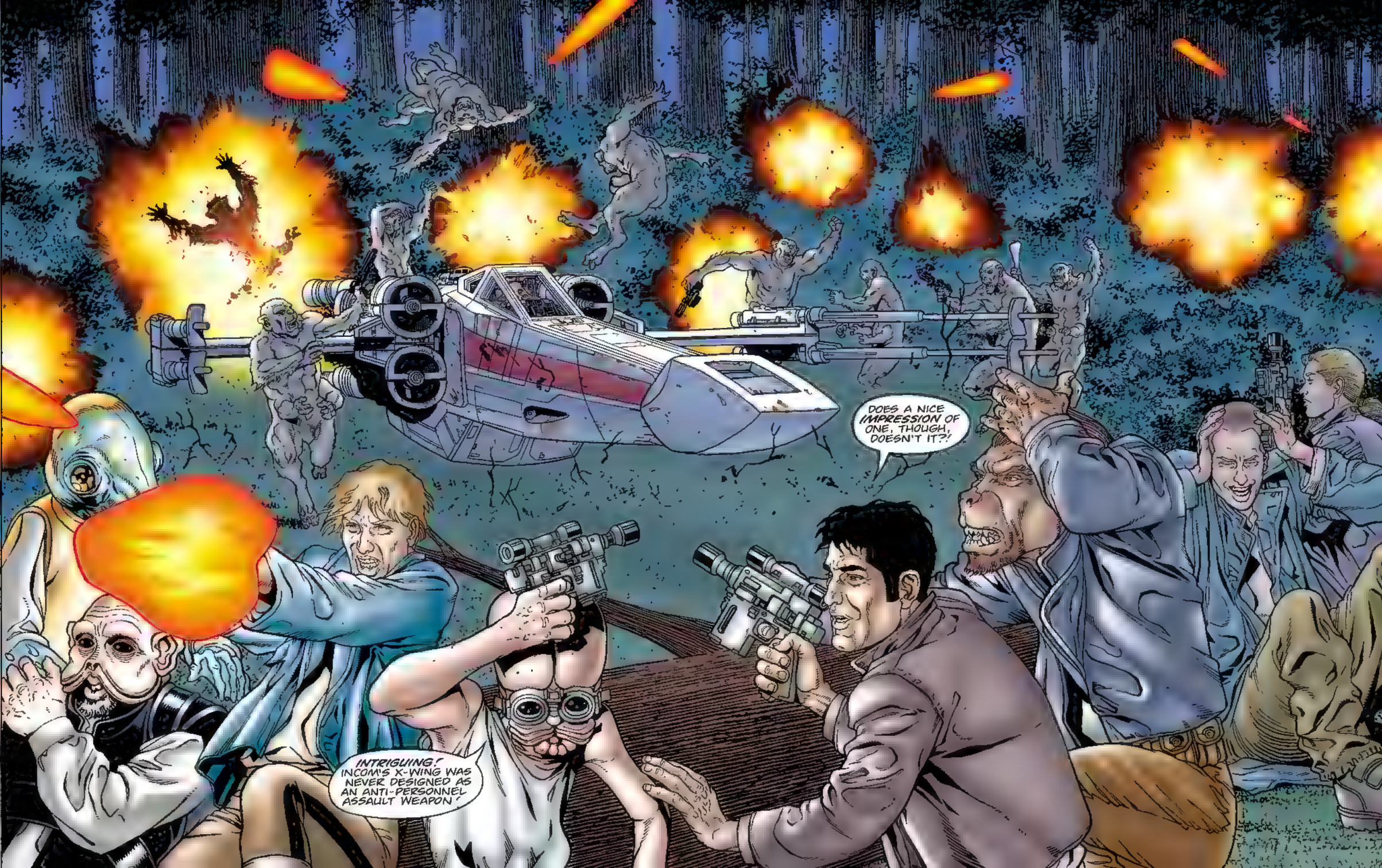
YOU SEE WHY I HOLD LITTLE HOPE FOR THE LIFE OF YOUR CAPTAIN ANTILLES! EVEN IF HE SURVIVED THE CRASH--!
POINT TAKEN!
I COULD USE SOME HELP, DLLR!
MUSIC'S... DEAFENING!
WATCH YOUR BACK, HOBBIE!
THANKS, FEYLIS!

IF WE DON'T HEAD THESE THINGS OFF *HERE*, THEY'LL OVERRUN THE SHIP!
OUR BLASTERS ARE *USELESS* AGAINST SUCH NUMBERS! WE DON'T HAVE A CHANCE FIGHTING LIKE THIS!
IS THAT YOUR *COURAGE* I HEAR *SHATTERING*, NRIN?

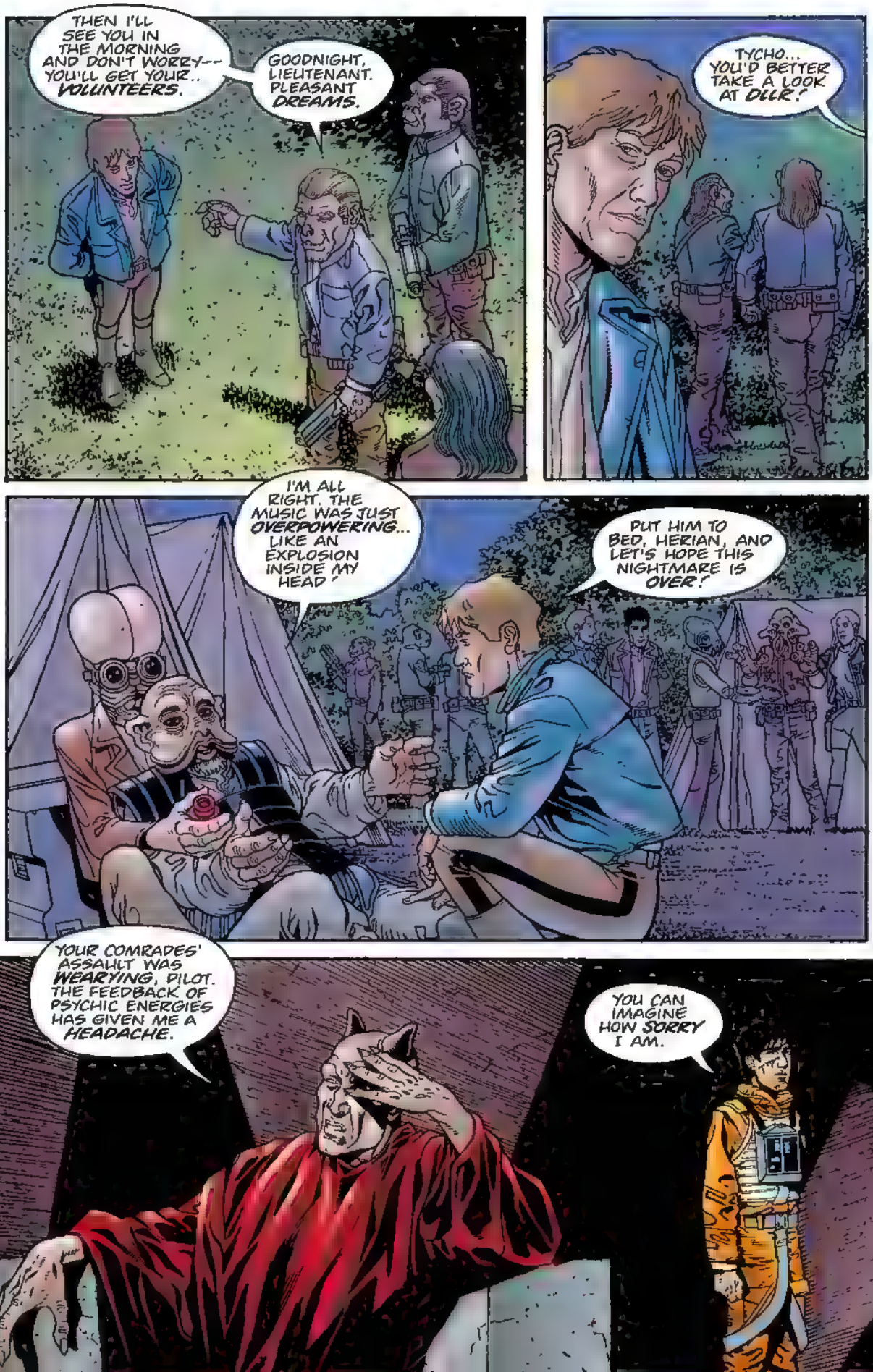
NRIN, YOU COWARD!
THAT'S RIGHT, MY PETS! CLEANSE THE FOREST OF INTRUDERS!

FILL THE AIR WITH THE MELODY OF RAGE!
LET THE POWER OF MY MIND GUIDE YOU! YOURS IS THE MUSCLE, BUT MINE IS THE WILL!
AS FOR YOU, PILOT. .
...YOU WILL DO NOTHING! AFTER ALL I'VE DONE TO RETURN YOU FROM THE BRINK OF DEATH, IT WOULD BE A SHAME IF I HAD TO KILL YOU AGAIN!

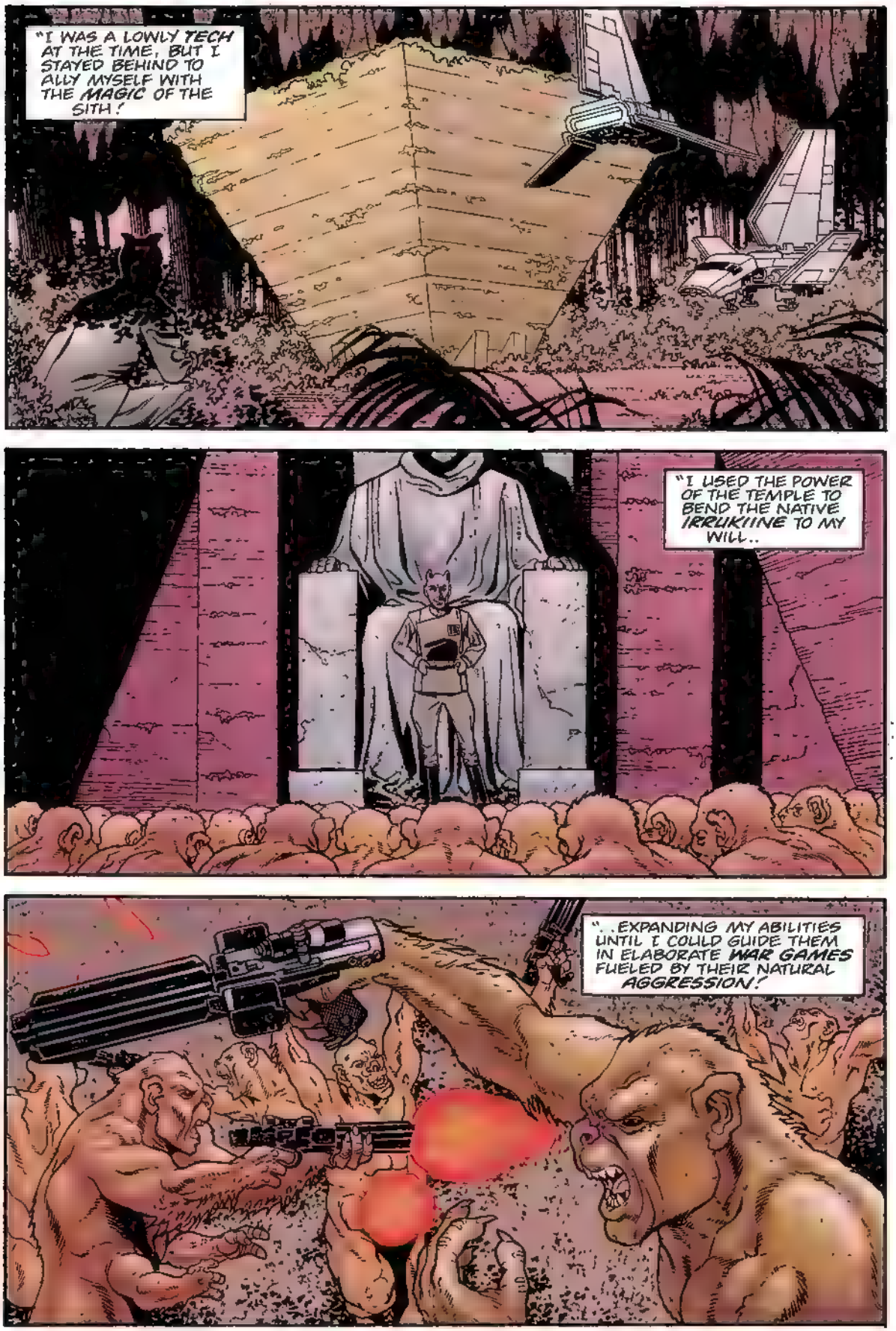
THIS IS MADNESS, GIROV! THE IRRUKIINE FIGHT LIKE BEASTS, BUT THEIR WEAPONS ARE HIGH-GRADE IMP ISSUE!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF, LIEUTENANT, BUT THE COMBINATION IS DEADLY!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
EVERYBODY DOWN! TAKE COVER!


DOES A NICE IMPRESSION OF ONE, THOUGH, DOESN'T IT?!
INTRIGUING! INCOM'S X-WING WAS NEVER DESIGNED AS AN ANTI-PERSONNEL ASSAULT WEAPON!

NRIN.
YOU MUST'VE FOUGHT YOUR WAY THROUGH TWENTY OF THOSE BEASTS TO REACH YOUR FIGHTER! AND TO THINK I CALLED YOU A COWARD!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, NRIN...
THEN MY GAMBIT PAID OFF MOST HANDSOMELY.
I'M NOT LETTING THOSE CREATURES TAKE US BY SURPRISE AGAIN!
WES AND I WILL STAND THE FIRST WATCH-- AND I'D LIKE A COUPLE OF BOTHAN VOLUNTEERS. THE REST OF YOU, TRY TO GET SOME SLEEP.
YOU SEE WHY I HOLD LITTLE HOPE FOR YOUR CAPTAIN'S SURVIVAL. DO YOU STILL INSIST ON SEARCHING THE FOREST FOR HIM TOMORROW?
NOW MORE THAN EVER


THEN I'LL SEE YOU IN THE MORNING AND DON'T WORRY-- YOU'LL GET YOUR.. VOLUNTEERS.
GOODNIGHT, LIEUTENANT. PLEASANT DREAMS.
TYCHO... YOU'D BETTER TAKE A LOOK AT OLLR!
I'M ALL RIGHT. THE MUSIC WAS JUST OVERPOWERING... LIKE AN EXPLOSION INSIDE MY HEAD!
PUT HIM TO BED, HERIAN, AND LET'S HOPE THIS NIGHTMARE IS OVER!
YOUR COMRADES' ASSAULT WAS WEARYING, PILOT. THE FEEDBACK OF PSYCHIC ENERGIES HAS GIVEN ME A HEADACHE.
YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW SORRY I AM.

THEY ONLY DELAY THEIR INEVITABLE DESTRUCTION. YOU SEE THE ARMAMENT AT MY DISPOSAL.
EMPEROR PALPATINE RECOGNIZED THIS TEMPLE AS A FOCAL POINT OF SITH MAGIC! IT WAS SLATED TO BECOME A MAJOR OUTPOST OF THE EMPIRE!
WHEN PALPATINE FELL, THE EMPIRE ABANDONED THE TEMPLE. THOSE WHO WERE STATIONED HERE FOUND ITS INFLUENCE DISTURBING!

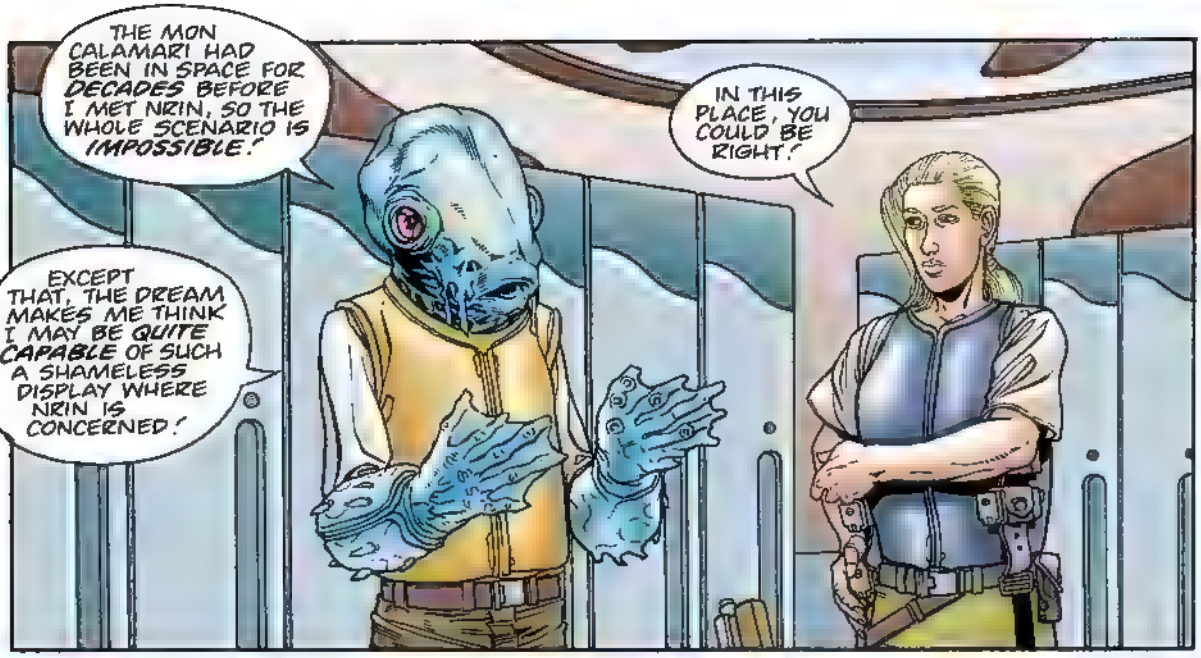

"I WAS A LOWLY TECH AT THE TIME, BUT I STAYED BEHIND TO ALLY MYSELF WITH THE MAGIC OF THE SITH!
"I USED THE POWER OF THE TEMPLE TO BEND THE NATIVE IRRUKIINE TO MY WILL..
"...EXPANDING MY ABILITIES UNTIL I COULD GUIDE THEM IN ELABORATE WAR GAMES FUELED BY THEIR NATURAL AGGRESSION!

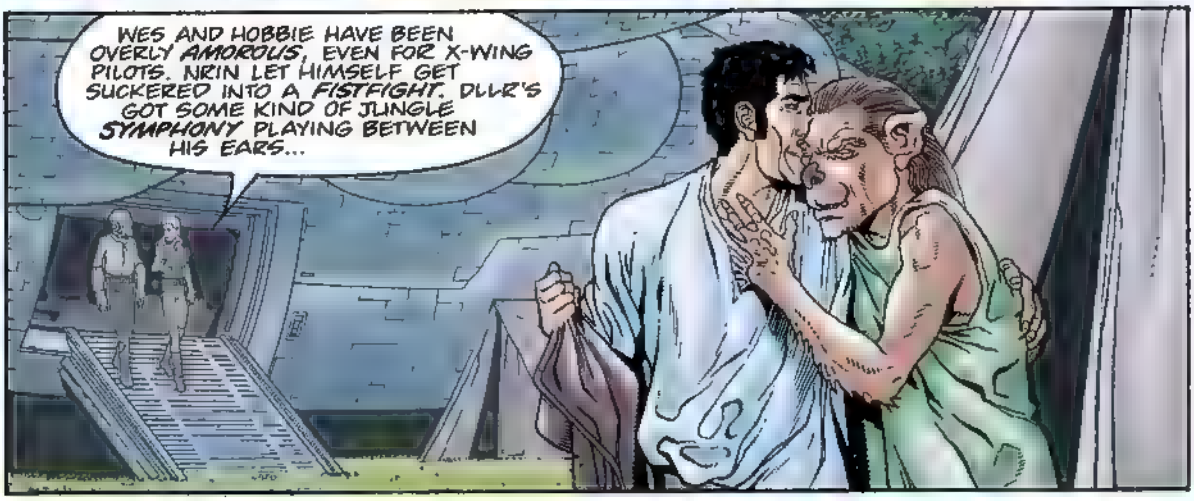
I USED THE SITH MAGIC TO REPAIR YOUR NEARLY-LIFELESS BODY, PILOT! SURRENDER TO THE MAGIC... EMBRACE IT... AND YOU WILL DISCOVER POWER BEYOND YOUR WILDEST DREAMS!
THE ONLY POWER YOU OFFER IS THE POWER TO WORK EVIL. NO GOOD COMES OF A PLACE LIKE THIS!
MY SQUADRON AND I WILL BRING THIS TEMPLE DOWN AROUND YOUR HORNS IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES TO STOP YOU!
YIIIIKKKK!
SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE! YOU BROKE MY CONCENTRATION!
SCREEIITTCH!

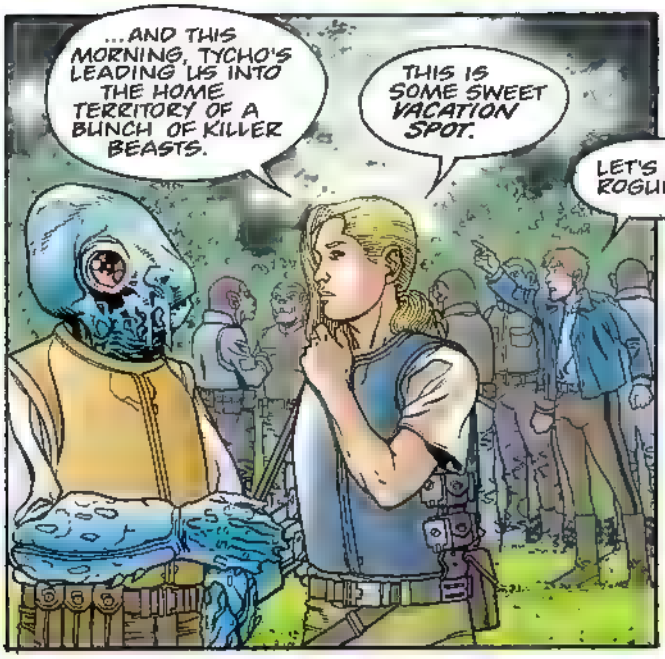
PLAY NICELY WITH ONE ANOTHER, BOYS. THAT'S IT!
OOOF!
YOU WILL SERVE ME YET, PILOT... AS BAIT! YOUR PRESENCE WILL LURE THE OTHERS...
...AND AMONG THEM I WILL DISCOVER MY DISCIPLE!

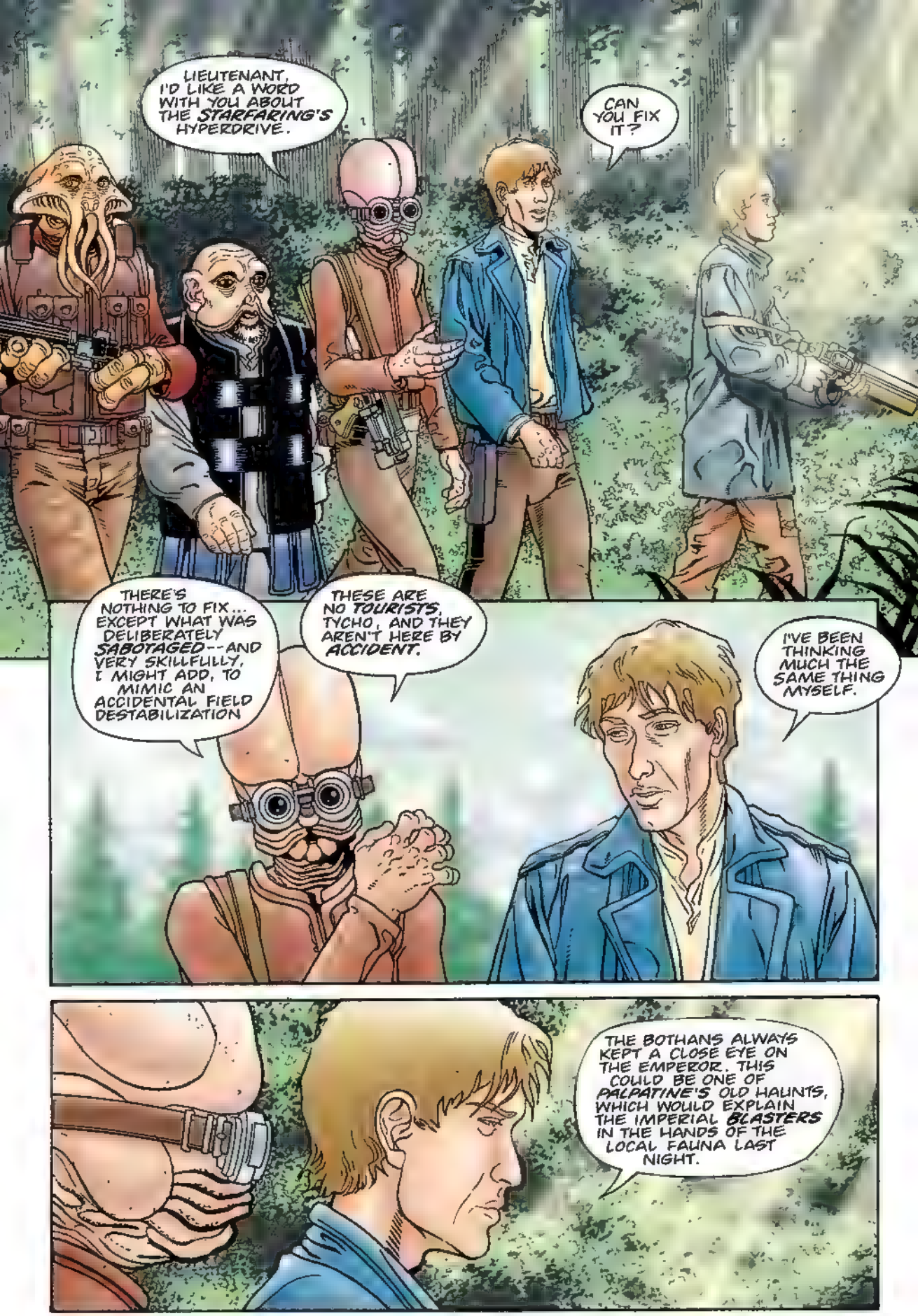
I SAY THAT THE RECKLESS SPACEFARING OF THE MON CALAMARI IS A DANGER TO OUR ENTIRE PLANET!
WHO KNOWS WHAT ENEMIES MAY BE LURED TO OUR PEACEFUL WORLD BY THESE EXCURSIONS INTO SPACE? WHY TAKE UNNECESSARY RISKS?
HE'S RIGHT!
YOU TELL IT, NRIN!
LISTEN TO THAT QUARREN FOOL! IF HE HAD HIS WAY, WE'D NEVER HAVE LEFT THE OCEAN!
STILL, HE'S QUITE... CHARISMATIC!

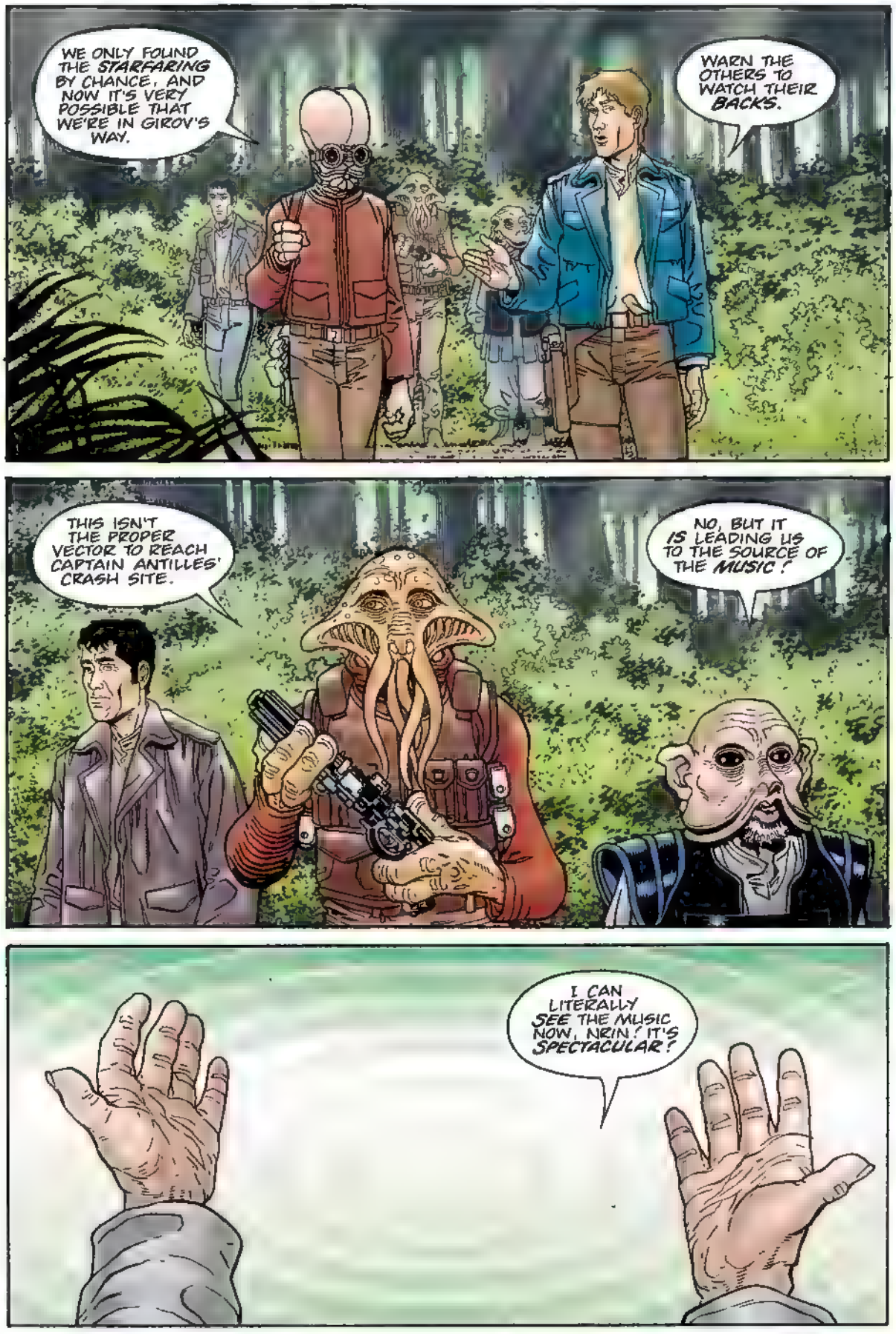
WE MUST NOT BE TOO EAGER TO EMBRACE A FUTURE THAT IS FRAUGHT WITH PERIL! TRADITION MUST BE OUR GUIDE, NOT IMPULSE!
IBTISAM! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
FOLLOWING AN IMPULSE!
I SAY THE MON CALAMARI MUST BE FORCED TO WALK THE PATH OF REASON!
AND I SAY...
...THE QUARREN MUST BE FORCED TO LOOSEN UP AND HAVE A LITTLE FUN!
THE DREAM WAS SO VIVID, FEYLIS! OF COURSE, NO SUCH INCIDENT EVER HAPPENED--NRIN NEVER MADE ANY SUCH SPEECH!


THE MON CALAMARI HAD BEEN IN SPACE FOR DECADES BEFORE I MET NRIN, SO THE WHOLE SCENARIO IS IMPOSSIBLE!
EXCEPT THAT, THE DREAM MAKES ME THINK I MAY BE QUITE CAPABLE OF SUCH A SHAMELESS DISPLAY WHERE NRIN IS CONCERNED!
IN THIS PLACE, YOU COULD BE RIGHT!


WES AND HOBBIE HAVE BEEN OVERLY AMOROUS, EVEN FOR X-WING PILOTS. NRIN LET HIMSELF GET SUCKERED INTO A FISTFIGHT. DLLR'S GOT SOME KIND OF JUNGLE SYMPHONY PLAYING BETWEEN HIS EARS...


...AND THIS MORNING, TYCHO'S LEADING US INTO THE HOME TERRITORY OF A BUNCH OF KILLER BEASTS.
THIS IS SOME SWEET VACATION SPOT.
LET'S GO, ROGUES!


LIEUTENANT, I'D LIKE A WORD WITH YOU ABOUT THE STARFARING'S HYPERDRIVE.
CAN YOU FIX IT?
THERE'S NOTHING TO FIX... EXCEPT WHAT WAS DELIBERATELY SABOTAGED--AND VERY SKILLFULLY, I MIGHT ADD, TO MIMIC AN ACCIDENTAL FIELD DESTABILIZATION
THESE ARE NO TOURISTS, TYCHO, AND THEY AREN'T HERE BY ACCIDENT.
I'VE BEEN THINKING MUCH THE SAME THING MYSELF.
THE BOTHANS ALWAYS KEPT A CLOSE EYE ON THE EMPEROR. THIS COULD BE ONE OF PALPATINE'S OLD HAUNTS, WHICH WOULD EXPLAIN THE IMPERIAL BLASTERS IN THE HANDS OF THE LOCAL FAUNA LAST NIGHT.


WE ONLY FOUND THE STARFARING BY CHANCE, AND NOW IT'S VERY POSSIBLE THAT WE'RE IN GIROV'S WAY.
WARN THE OTHERS TO WATCH THEIR BACKS.
THIS ISN'T THE PROPER VECTOR TO REACH CAPTAIN ANTILLES' CRASH SITE.
NO, BUT IT IS LEADING US TO THE SOURCE OF THE MUSIC!
I CAN LITERALLY SEE THE MUSIC NOW, NRIN! IT'S SPECTACULAR!

THE PILOTS ARE SUSPICIOUS, GIROV. EVERYWHERE I LOOK, I SEE THEM WHISPERING TOGETHER.
THEY WILL NOT BE A PROBLEM FOR MUCH LONGER.
EMPEROR PALPATINE WAS RIGHT TO LOCATE AN OUTPOST HERE! I CAN SENSE GREAT ENERGY... GREAT POWER!
AND THERE IS ITS FOCUS!

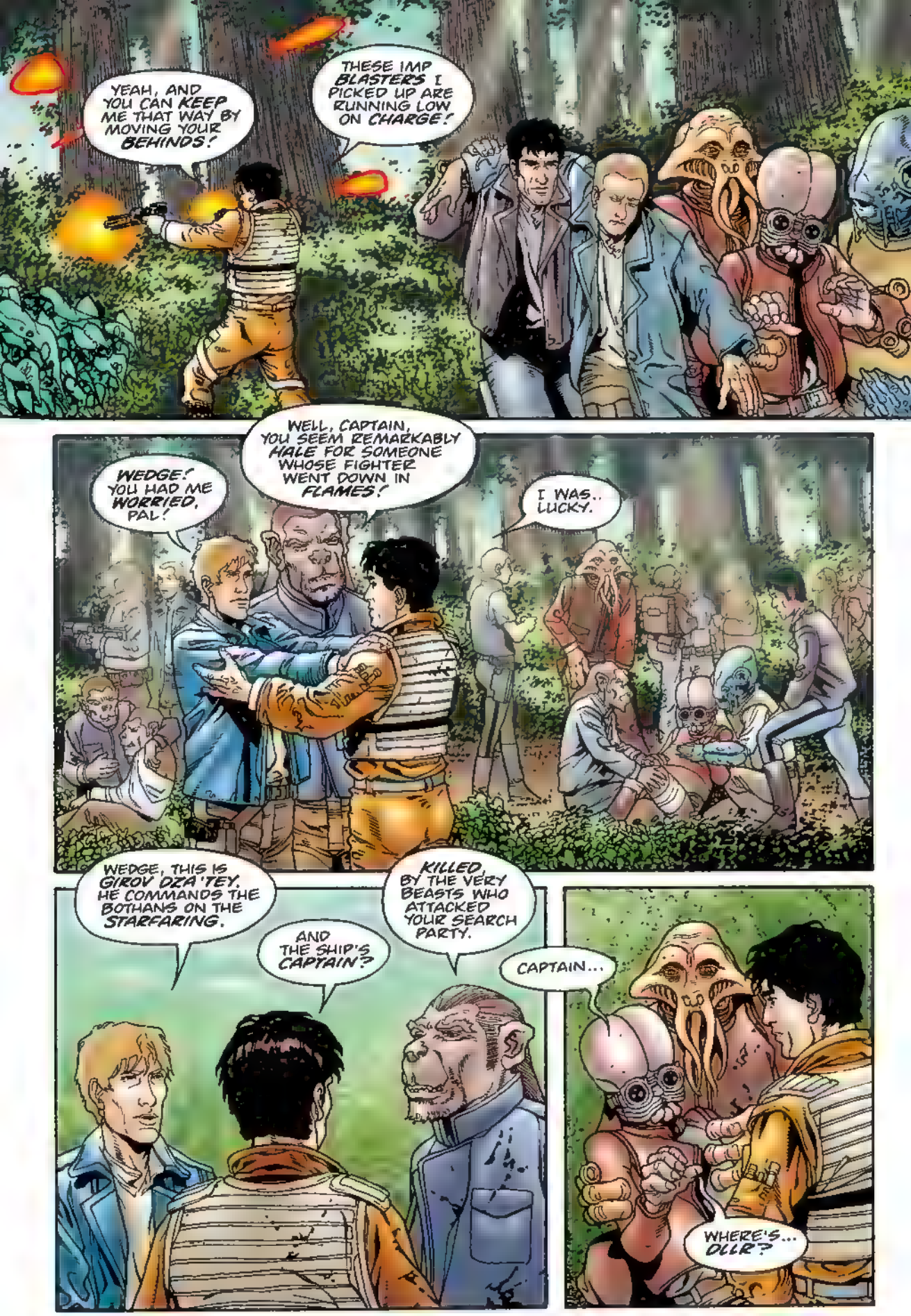
IRRUKIINE! DEFENSE FORMATION!
THEY KNEW WE WERE COMING... LAY IN WAIT... AND MOUNTED A COORDINATED ATTACK!
SOMEONE'S GUIDING THEIR MOVES, DOING THEIR THINKING FOR THEM!
I QUITE AGREE, LIEUTENANT!
NOW'S MY CHANCE TO ESCAPE, WHILE THE BATTLE COMMANDS THE DEVARONIAN'S FULL ATTENTION!

FOR ONCE, MY INSENSITIVITY TO SUPRANORMAL ENERGIES LIKE SITH MAGIC AND THE FORCE WORKED IN MY FAVOR!
OTHERS IN ROGUE SQUADRON MAY BE MORE VULNERABLE! I HAVE TO WARN THEM!
WHY ISN'T ANYTHING EVER EASY?!
NO BLASTER, OF COURSE. OKAY, LET'S SEE HOW HE LIKES THE TASTE OF...
...A FULLY CHARGED POWER PACK!

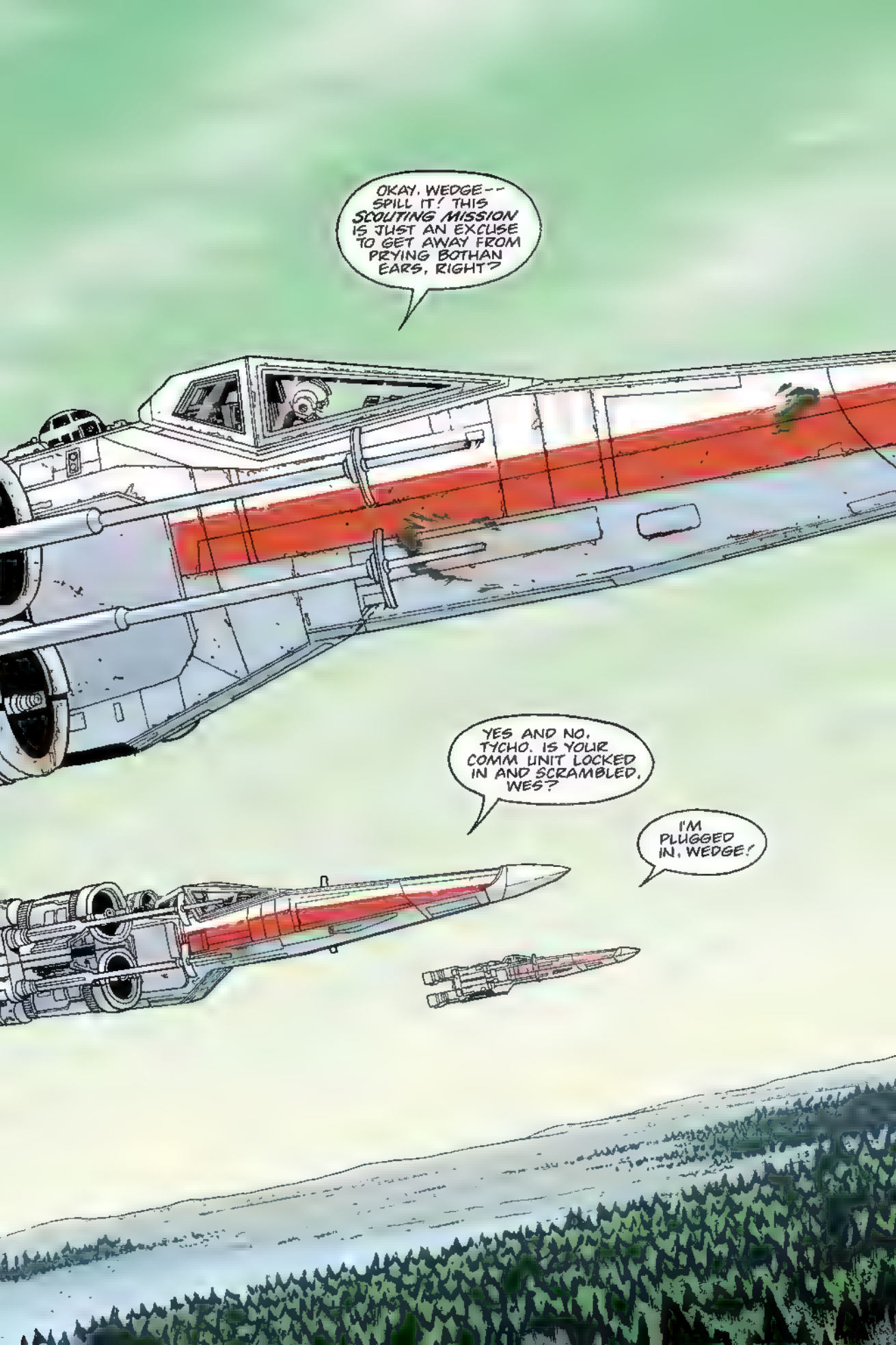
I'VE BEEN ACCLIMATING MYSELF TO THE MUSIC, LEARNING TO TOLERATE ITS INTRUSION INTO MY MIND! BUT IT'S SO LOUD... CAN'T CONCENTRATE!
UGGHHN!
THERE'S TOO MANY OF THEM! WE HAVE TO RETREAT!
ROGUES--FALL BACK!
WAIT! HERIAN'S DOWN!

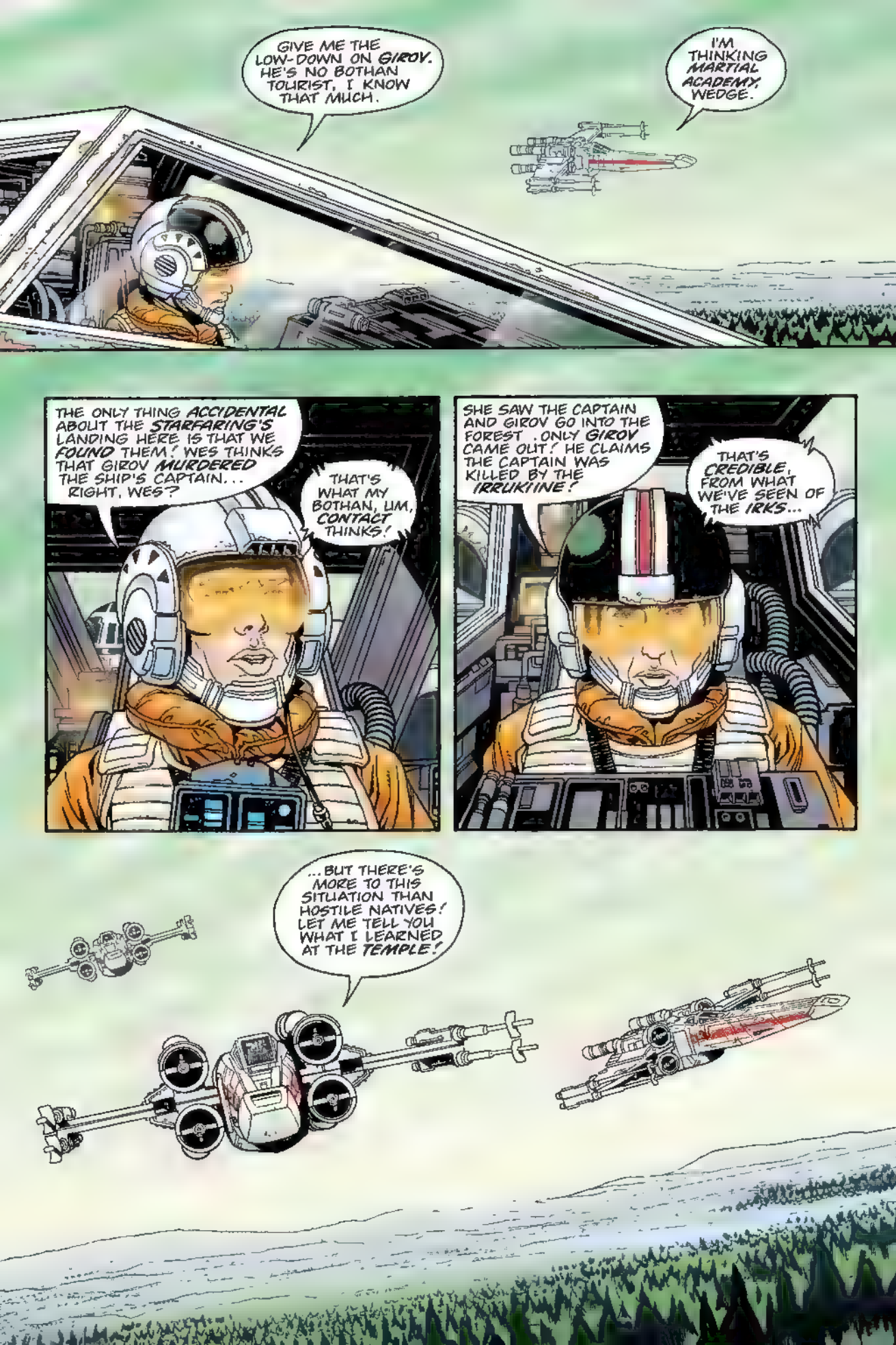
PICK HER UP, BUT BE QUICK ABOUT IT!
WAAAEEE!
IS SHE ALIVE?
YEAH, BUT NOT FOR MUCH LONGER IF WE DON'T GET HER OUT OF HERE!
GO ON! I'VE GOT YOU COVERED!

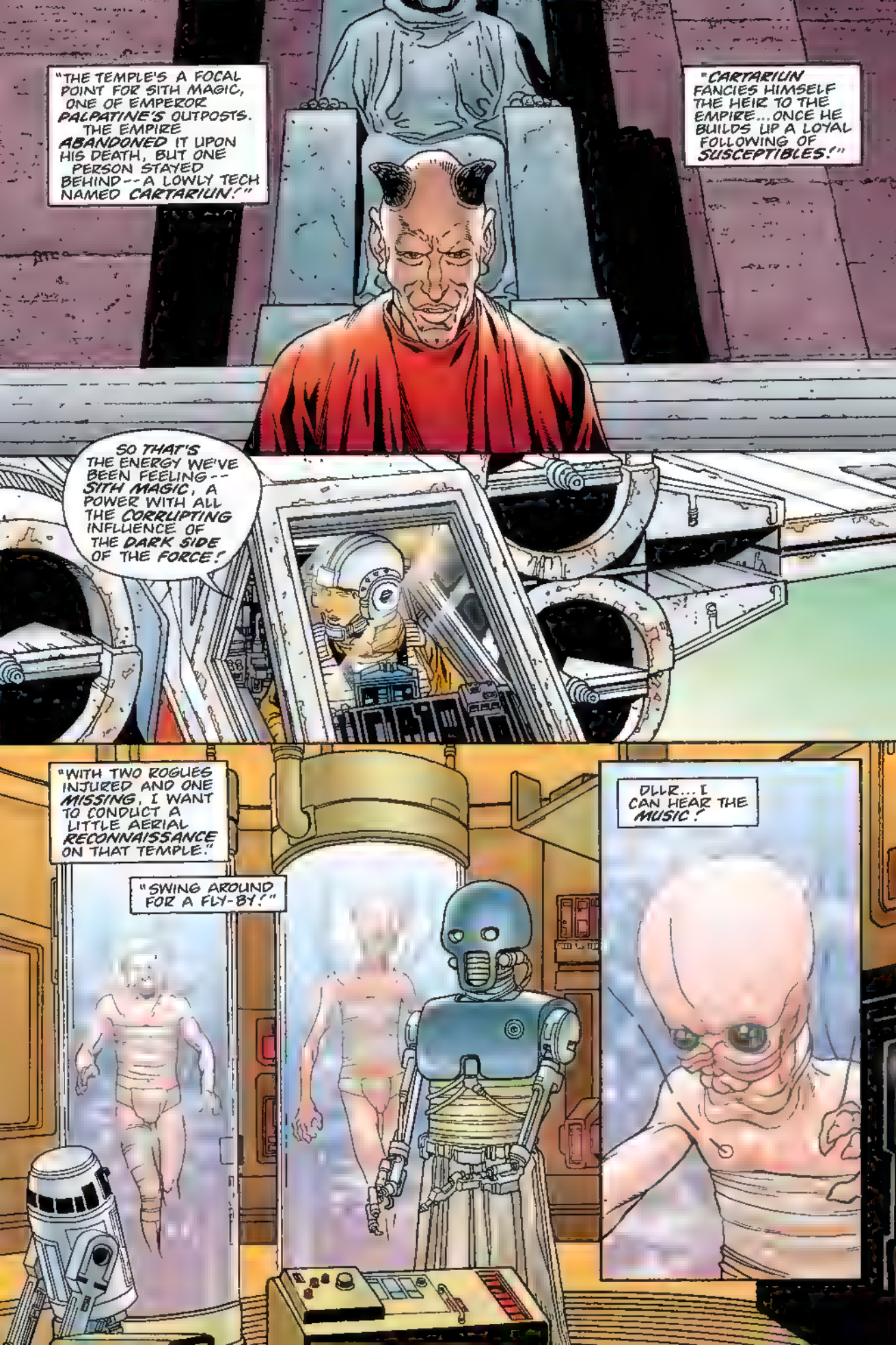
GNNN!
HOBBIE!
HOBBIE, CAN YOU WALK?!
I'M... FINE. HELP HERIAN!
SURE. YOU'RE FINE-- LIKE A SPEEDER WRECK!
HELP IS ON THE WAY FOR HERIAN COME ON... LEAN ON ME!
THEY'VE CUT US OFF FROM THE OTHERS!
EVERYBODY, DOWN!
WEDGE! YOU'RE ALIVE!

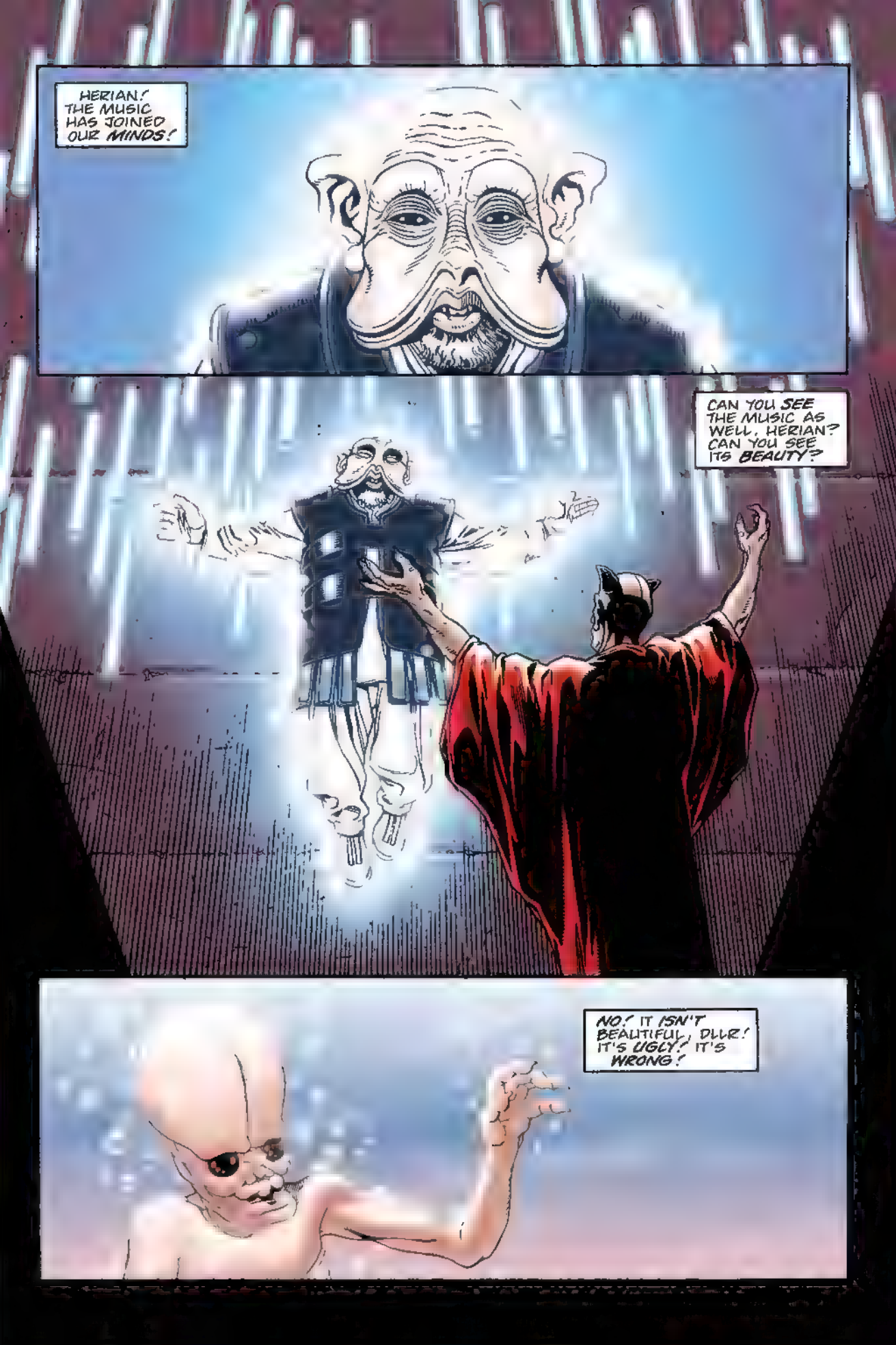

YEAH, AND YOU CAN KEEP ME THAT WAY BY MOVING YOUR BEHINDS!
THESE IMP BLASTERS I PICKED UP ARE RUNNING LOW ON CHARGE!
WEDGE! YOU HAD ME WORRIED, PAL!
WELL, CAPTAIN, YOU SEEM REMARKABLY HALE FOR SOMEONE WHOSE FIGHTER WENT DOWN IN FLAMES!
I WAS.. LUCKY.
WEDGE, THIS IS GIROV DZA'TEY. HE COMMANDS THE BOTHANS ON THE STARFARING.
AND THE SHIP'S CAPTAIN?
KILLED BY THE VERY BEASTS WHO ATTACKED YOUR SEARCH PARTY.
CAPTAIN...
WHERE'S... OLLR?

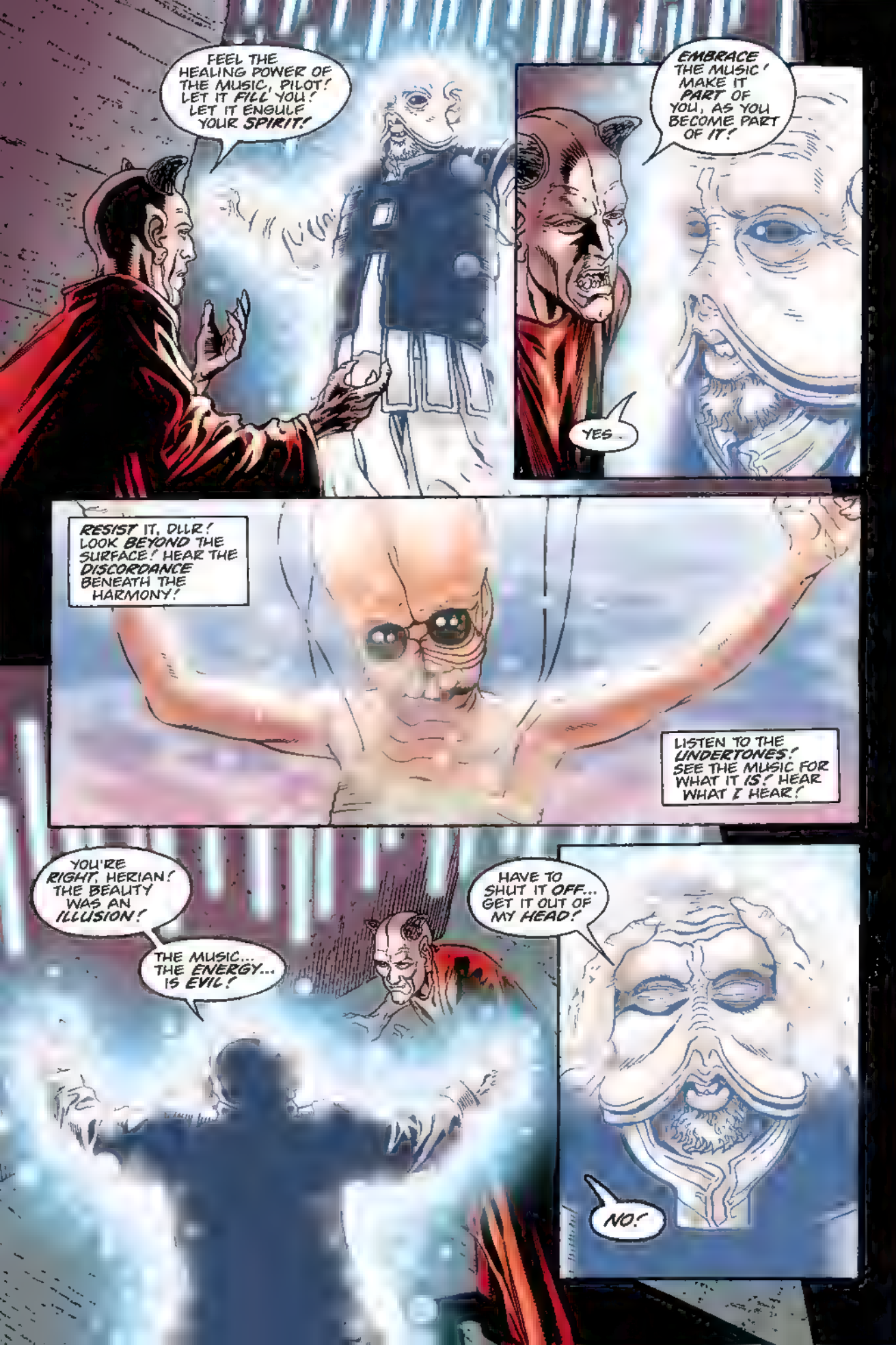
SO YOU'RE THE ONE.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR WOUNDS--I'VE HEALED MUCH WORSE. JUST RELAX...
...AND LISTEN TO THE MUSIC!


OKAY, WEDGE--SPILL IT! THIS SCOUTING MISSION IS JUST AN EXCUSE TO GET AWAY FROM PRYING BOTHAN EARS, RIGHT?
YES AND NO, TYCHO. IS YOUR COMM UNIT LOCKED IN AND SCRAMBLED, WES?
I'M PLUGGED IN, WEDGE!

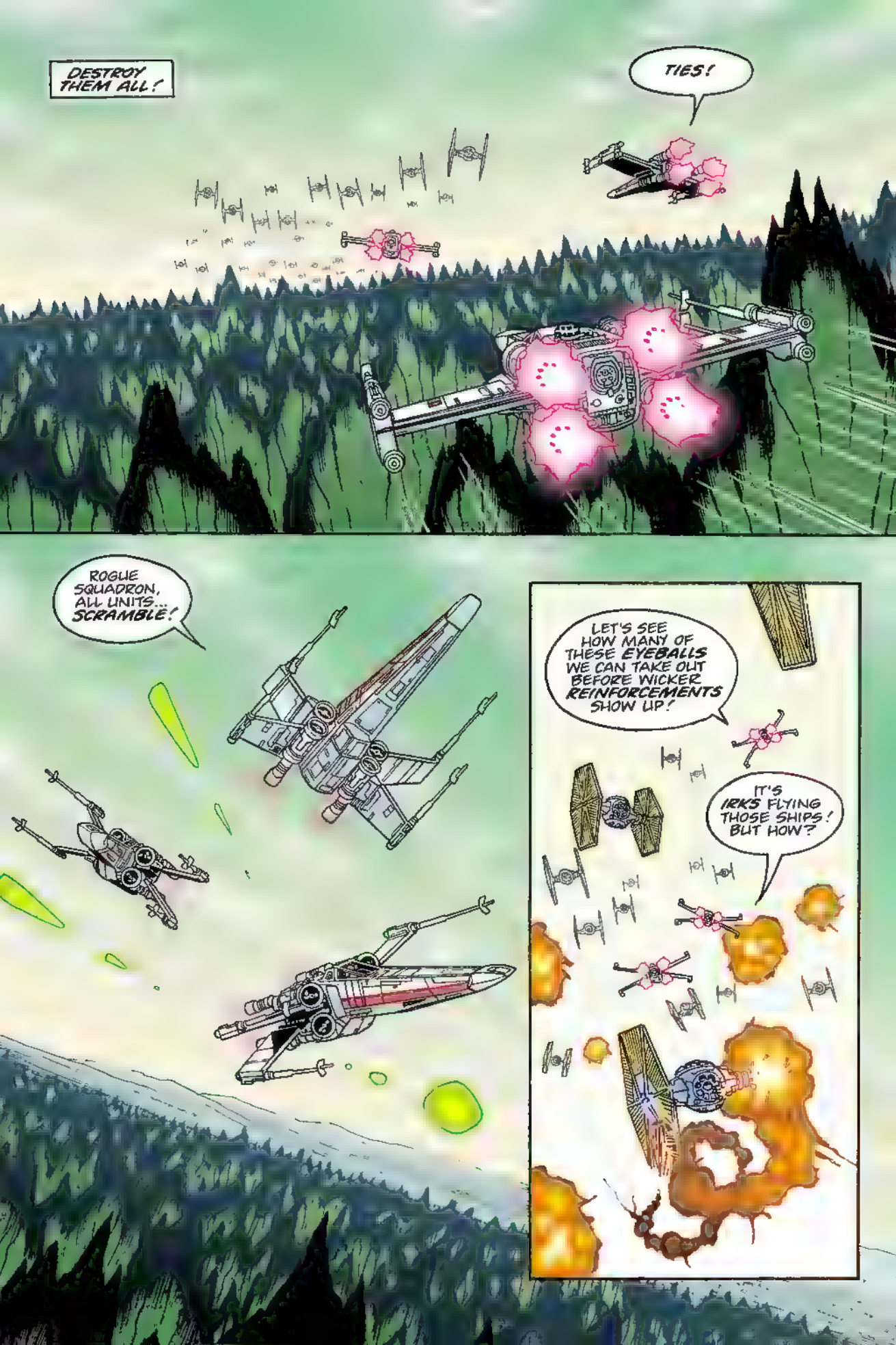

GIVE ME THE LOW-DOWN ON GIROV. HE'S NO BOTHAN TOURIST, I KNOW THAT MUCH.
I'M THINKING MARTIAL ACADEMY, WEDGE.
THE ONLY THING ACCIDENTAL ABOUT THE STARFARING'S LANDING HERE IS THAT WE FOUND THEM! WES THINKS THAT GIROV MURDERED THE SHIP'S CAPTAIN... RIGHT, WES?
THAT'S WHAT MY BOTHAN, UM, CONTACT THINKS!
SHE SAW THE CAPTAIN AND GIROV GO INTO THE FOREST. ONLY GIROV CAME OUT! HE CLAIMS THE CAPTAIN WAS KILLED BY THE IRRUKINE!
THAT'S CREDIBLE, FROM WHAT WE'VE SEEN OF THE IRKS...
...BUT THERE'S MORE TO THIS SITUATION THAN HOSTILE NATIVES! LET ME TELL YOU WHAT I LEARNED AT THE TEMPLE!

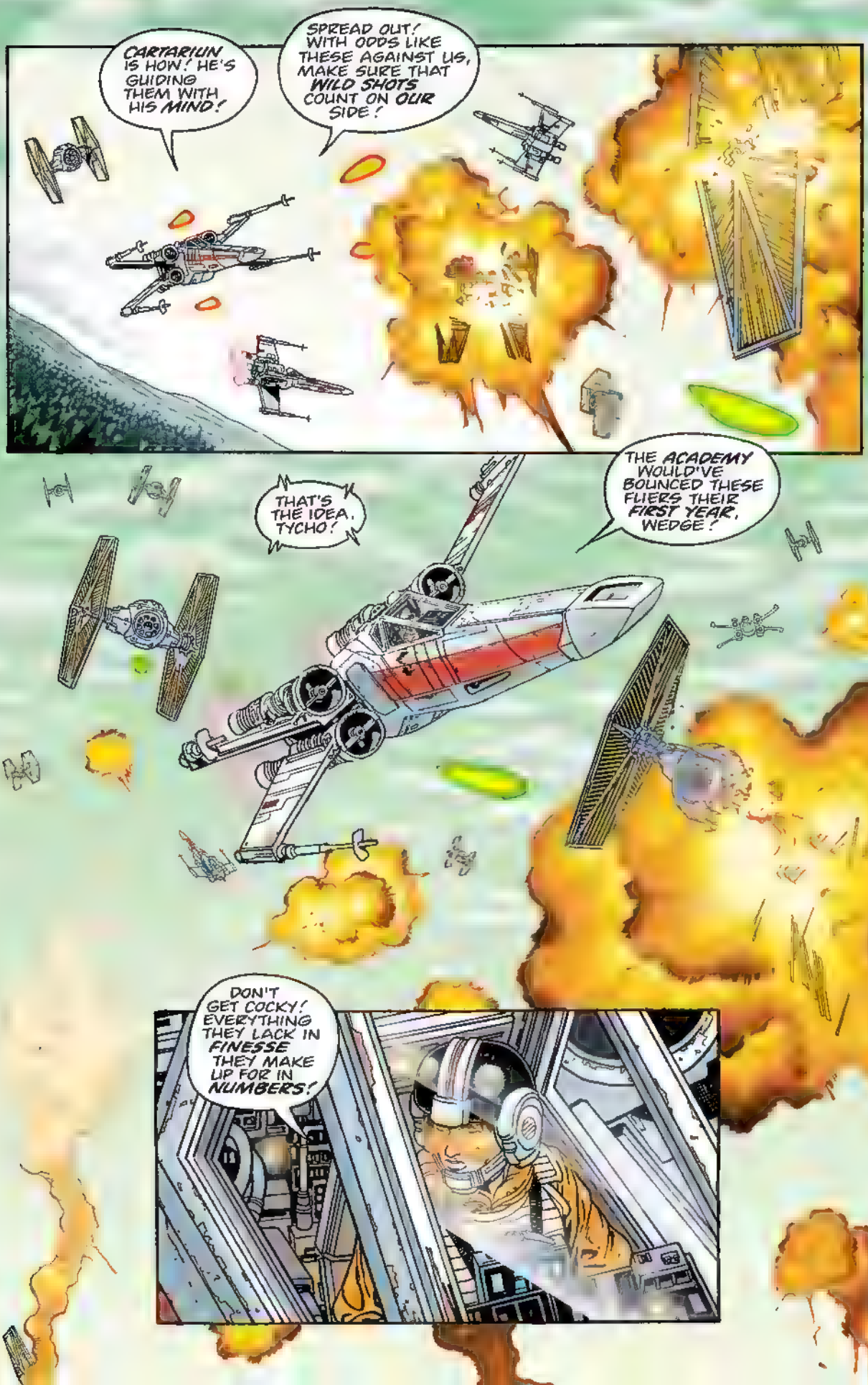

"THE TEMPLE'S A FOCAL POINT FOR SITH MAGIC, ONE OF EMPEROR PALPATINE'S OUTPOSTS. THE EMPIRE ABANDONED IT UPON HIS DEATH, BUT ONE PERSON STAYED BEHIND--A LOWLY TECH NAMED CARTARIUN!"
"CARTARIUN FANCIES HIMSELF THE HEIR TO THE EMPIRE...ONCE HE BUILDS UP A LOYAL FOLLOWING OF SUSCEPTIBLES!"
SO THAT'S THE ENERGY WE'VE BEEN FEELING--SITH MAGIC, A POWER WITH ALL THE CORRUPTING INFLUENCE OF THE DARK SIDE OF THE FORCE!
"WITH TWO ROGUES INJURED AND ONE MISSING, I WANT TO CONDUCT A LITTLE AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE ON THAT TEMPLE."
"SWING AROUND FOR A FLY-BY!"
DLLR... I CAN HEAR THE MUSIC!

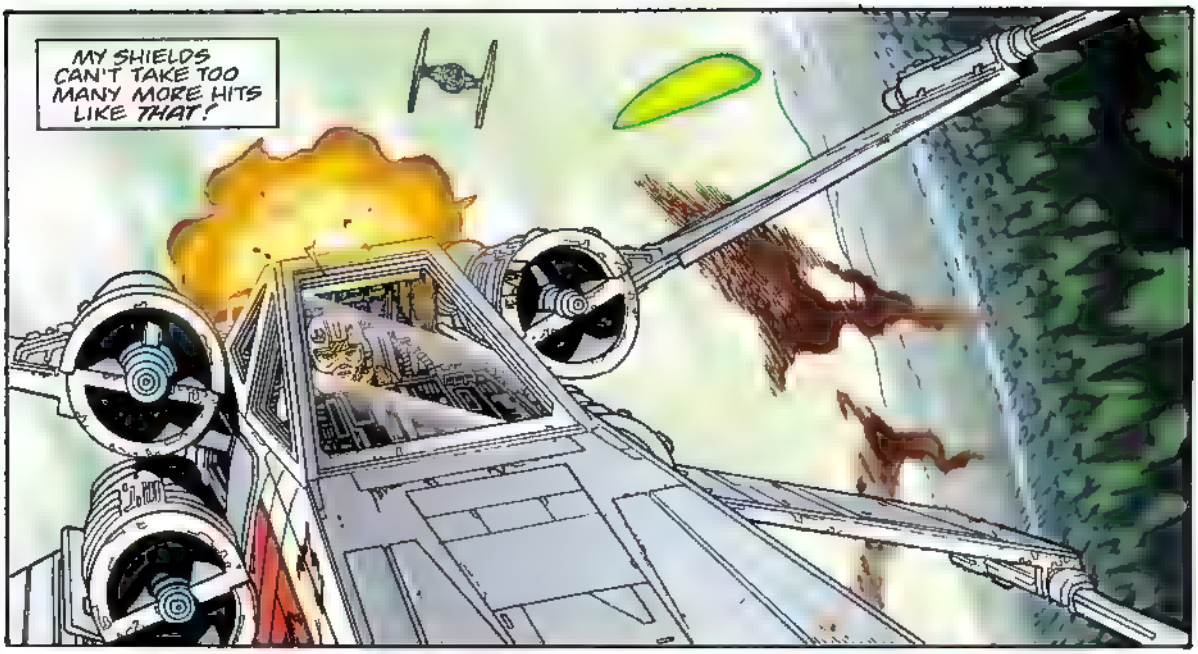

HERIAN! THE MUSIC HAS JOINED OUR MINDS!
CAN YOU SEE THE MUSIC AS WELL, HERIAN? CAN YOU SEE ITS BEAUTY?
NO! IT ISN'T BEAUTIFUL, DLLR! IT'S UGLY! IT'S WRONG!

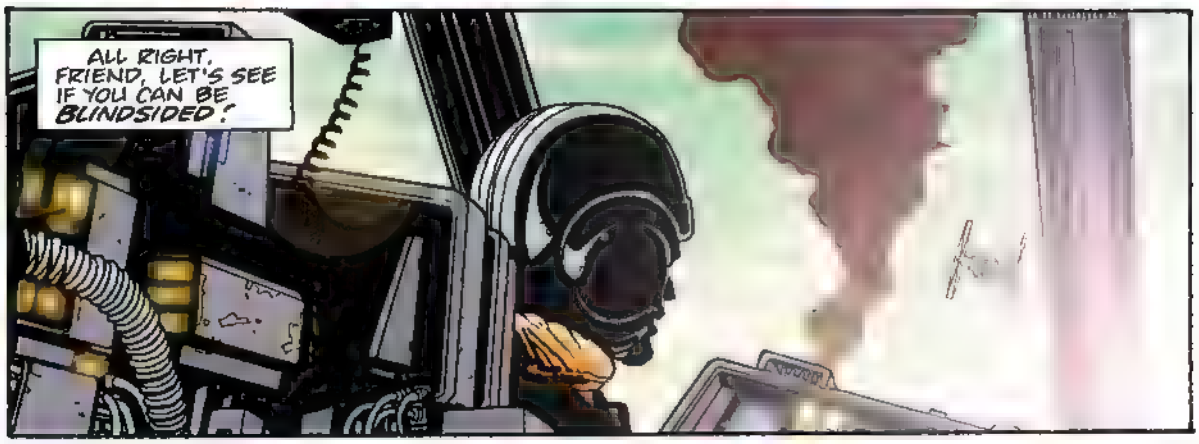

FEEL THE HEALING POWER OF THE MUSIC, PILOT! LET IT FILL YOU! LET IT ENGULF YOUR SPIRIT!
EMBRACE THE MUSIC! MAKE IT PART OF YOU, AS YOU BECOME PART OF IT!
YES...
RESIST IT, DLLR! LOOK BEYOND THE SURFACE! HEAR THE DISCORDANCE BENEATH THE HARMONY!
LISTEN TO THE UNDERTONES! SEE THE MUSIC FOR WHAT IT IS! HEAR WHAT I HEAR!
YOU'RE RIGHT, HERIAN! THE BEAUTY WAS AN ILLUSION!
THE MUSIC... THE ENERGY... IS EVIL!
HAVE TO SHUT IT OFF... GET IT OUT OF MY HEAD!
NO!

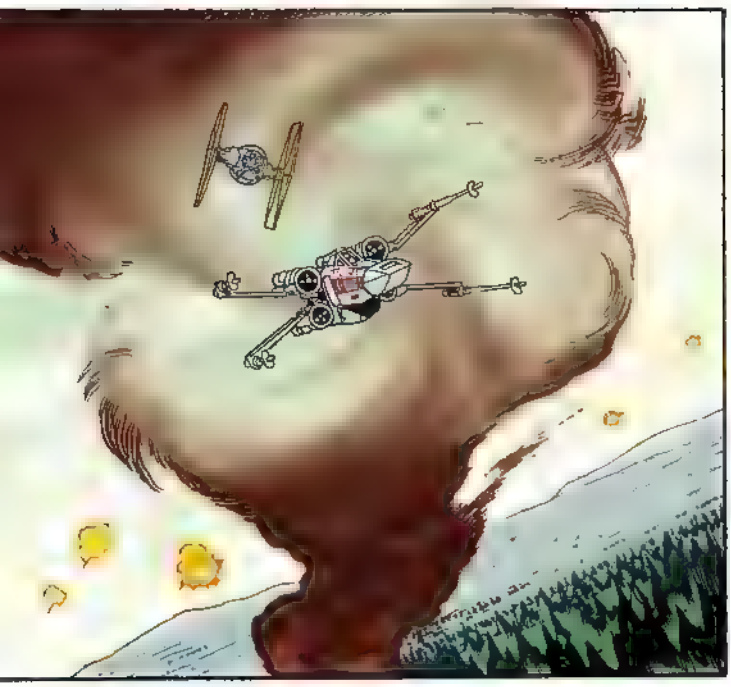
HE REJECTS THE POWER! HE IS USELESS TO ME!
KILL HIM, MY PETS!
NONE OF THE INTRUDERS ARE WORTHY TO JOIN US! THEY'RE ALL AFRAID AND WEAK!
DESTROY THEM!

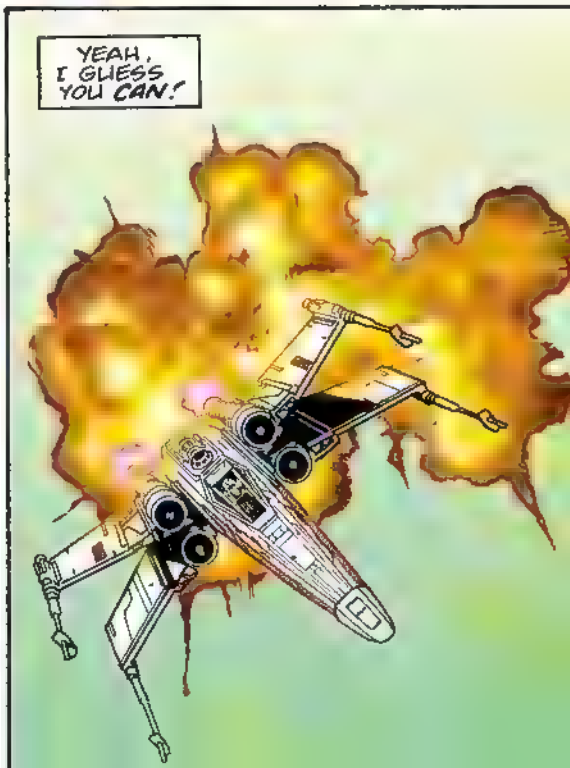

DESTROY THEM ALL!
TIES!
ROGUE SQUADRON, ALL UNITS... SCRAMBLE!
LET'S SEE HOW MANY OF THESE EYEBALLS WE CAN TAKE OUT BEFORE WICKER REINFORCEMENTS SHOW UP!
IT'S IRKS FLYING THOSE SHIPS! BUT HOW?


CARTARIUN IS HOW! HE'S GUIDING THEM WITH HIS MIND!
SPREAD OUT! WITH ODDS LIKE THESE AGAINST US, MAKE SURE THAT WILD SHOTS COUNT ON OUR SIDE!
THAT'S THE IDEA, TYCHO!
THE ACADEMY WOULD'VE BOUNCED THESE FLIERS THEIR FIRST YEAR, WEDGE!
DON'T GET COCKY! EVERYTHING THEY LACK IN FINESSE THEY MAKE UP FOR IN NUMBERS!

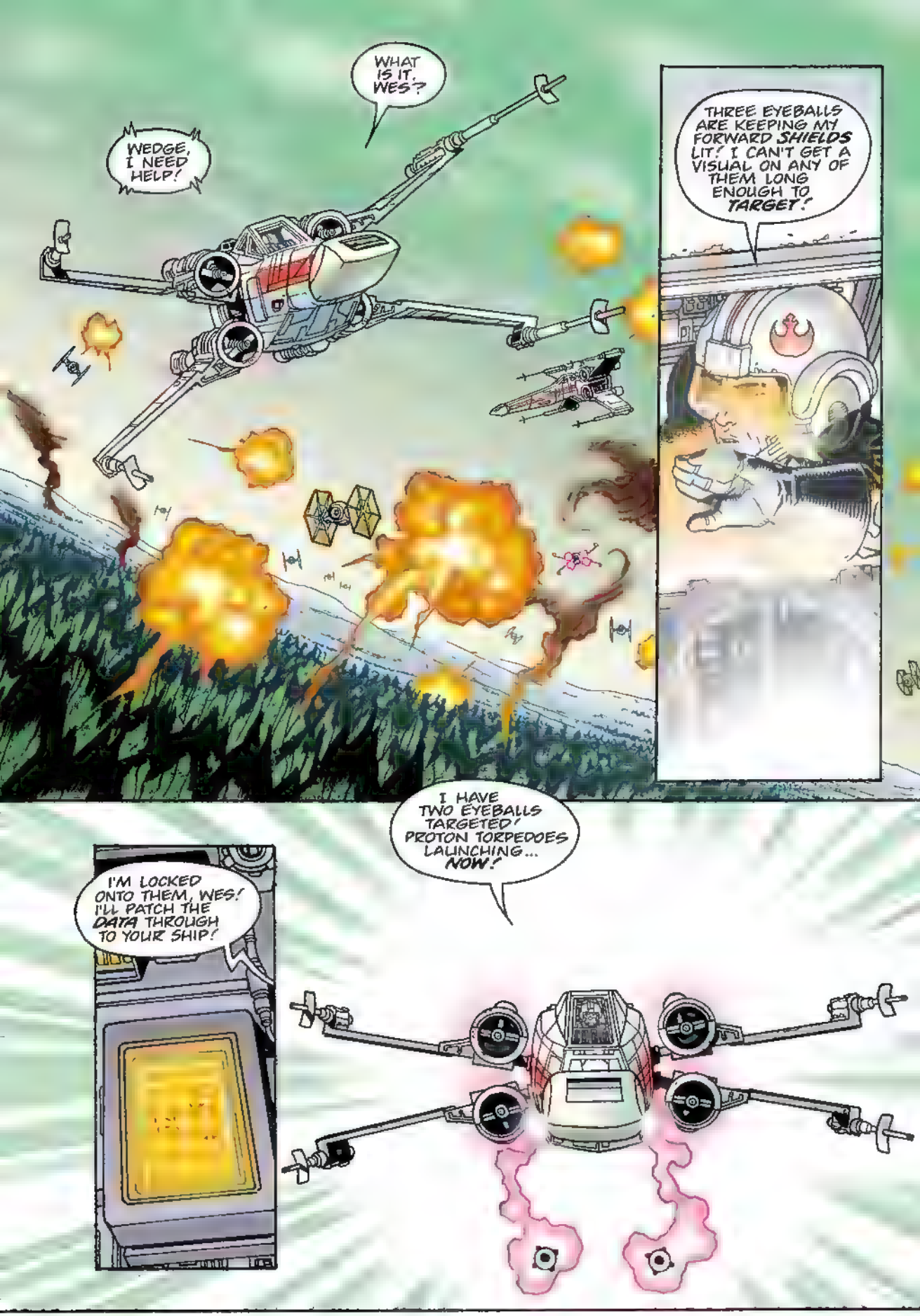

MY SHIELDS CAN'T TAKE TOO MANY MORE HITS LIKE THAT!

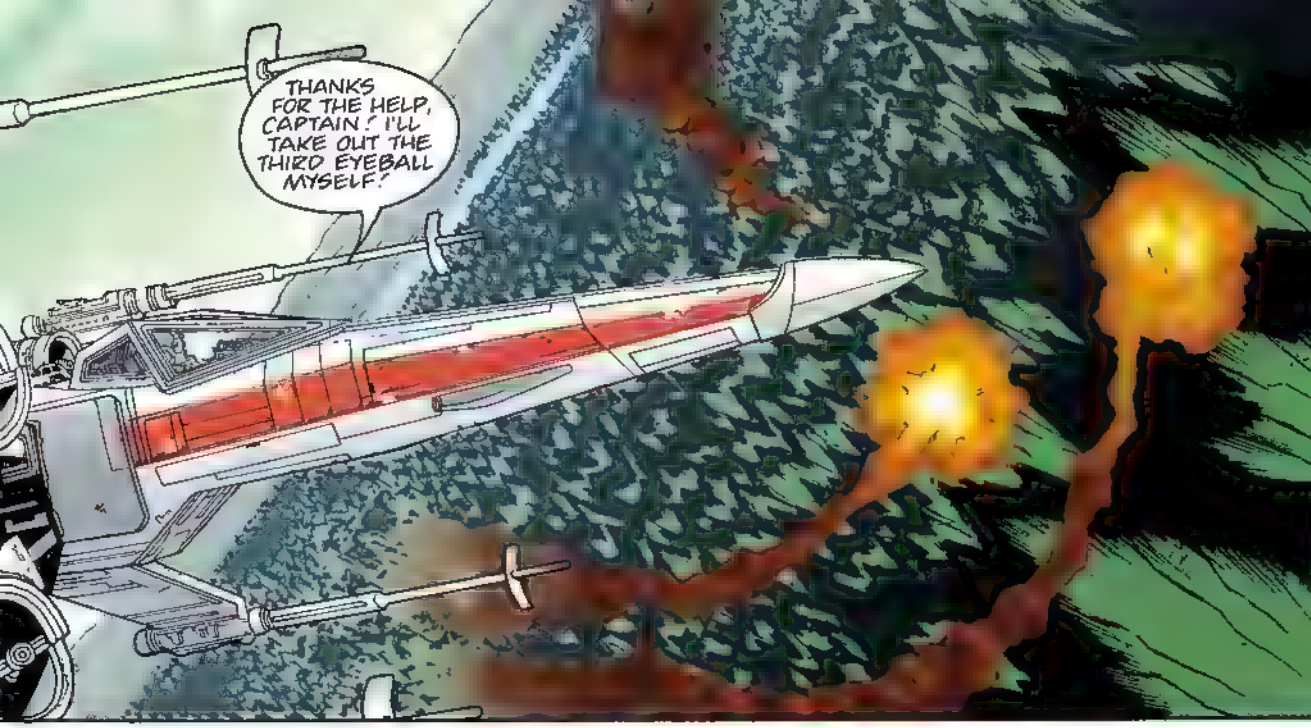

ALL RIGHT, FRIEND, LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN BE BLINDSIDED!

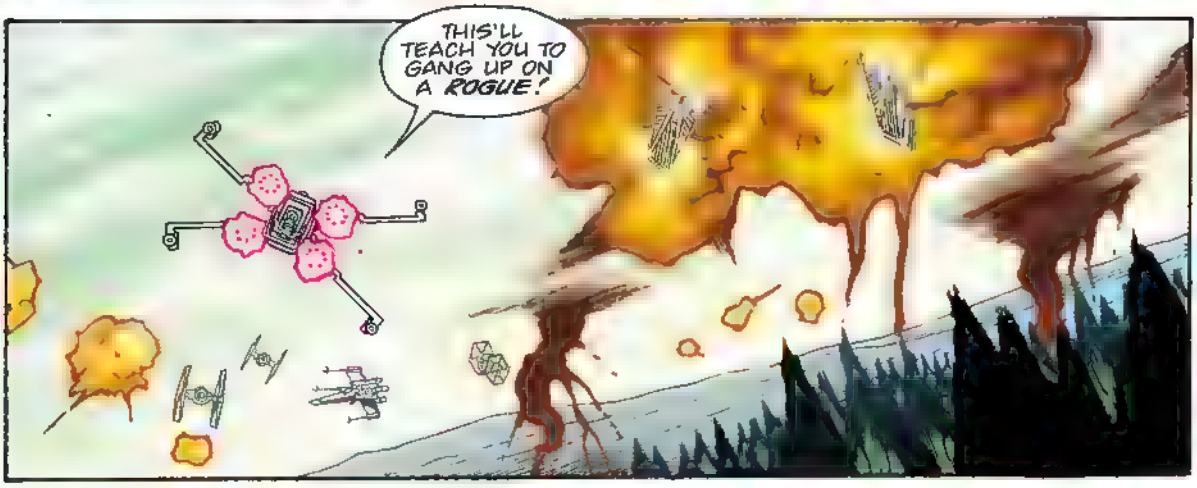


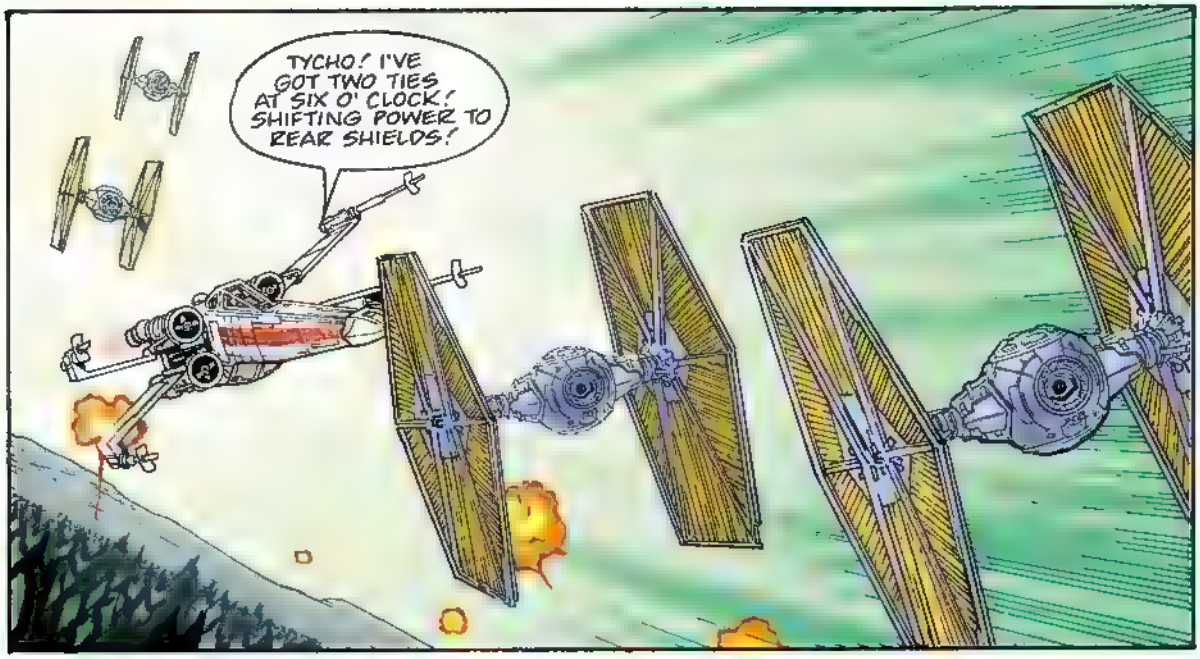

YEAH, I GUESS YOU CAN!

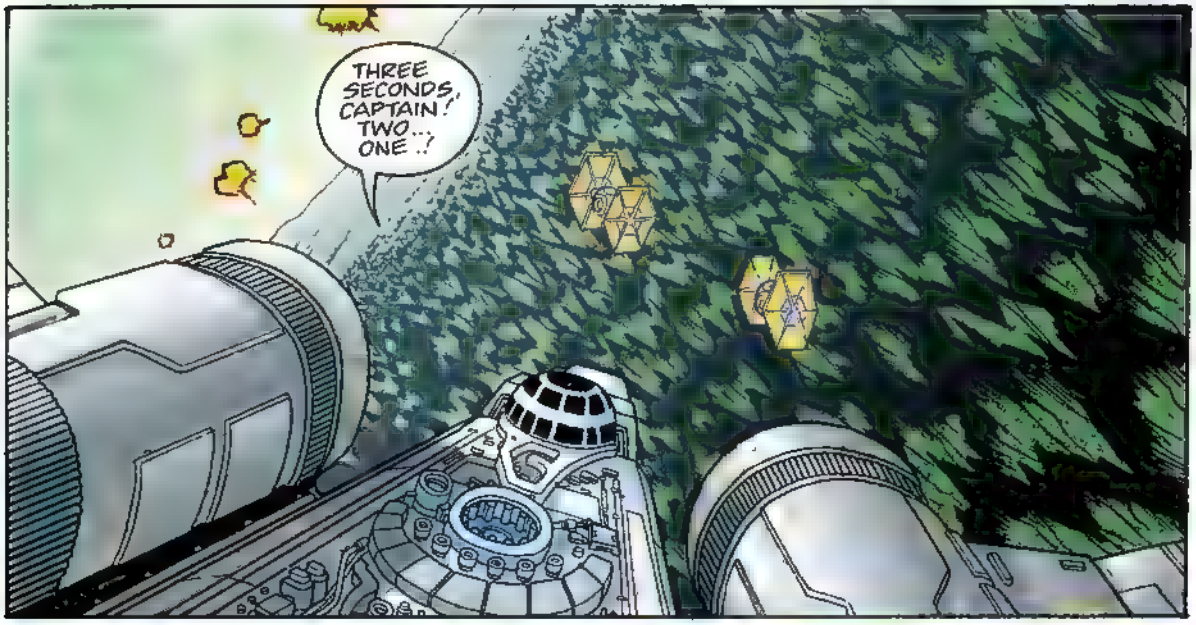
THE TIE ATTACK COULD BE NOTHING MORE THAN A DIVERSION! WE HAVE TO PREPARE FOR A GROUND ASSAULT!
YOU DO THAT, GIROV!
TAKE CHARGE OF THE PREPARATIONS I'M GOING TO SCOUT THE FOREST.
ALONE?
DON'T WORRY. I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.
YES, COMMANDER, I BELIEVE YOU DO.
BUT IN WHOSE INTEREST ARE YOU DOING IT?

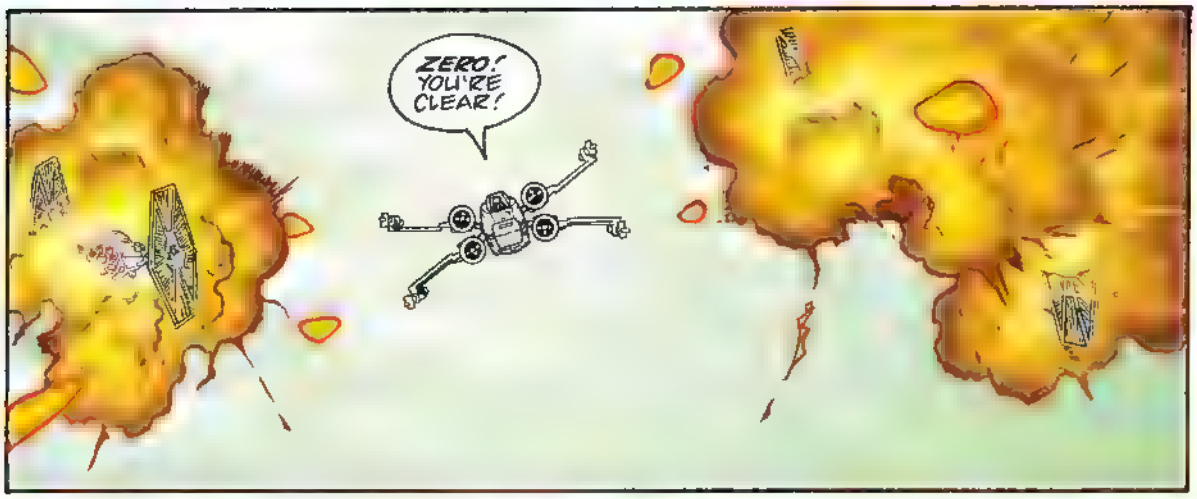

WHAT IS IT, WES?
WEDGE, I NEED HELP!
THREE EYEBALLS ARE KEEPING MY FORWARD SHIELDS LIT! I CAN'T GET A VISUAL ON ANY OF THEM LONG ENOUGH TO TARGET!
I HAVE TWO EYEBALLS TARGETED! PROTON TORPEDOES LAUNCHING... NOW!
I'M LOCKED ONTO THEM, WES! I'LL PATCH THE DATA THROUGH TO YOUR SHIP!

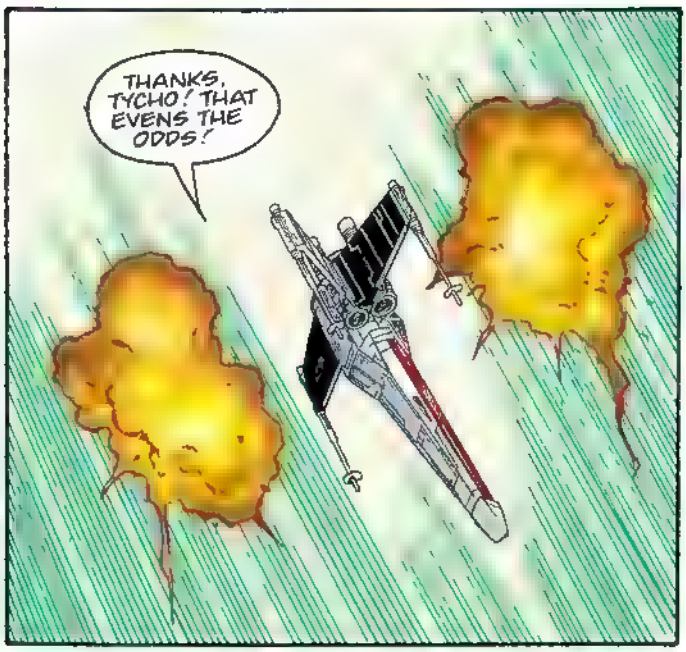

THANKS FOR THE HELP, CAPTAIN! I'LL TAKE OUT THE THIRD EYEBALL MYSELF!

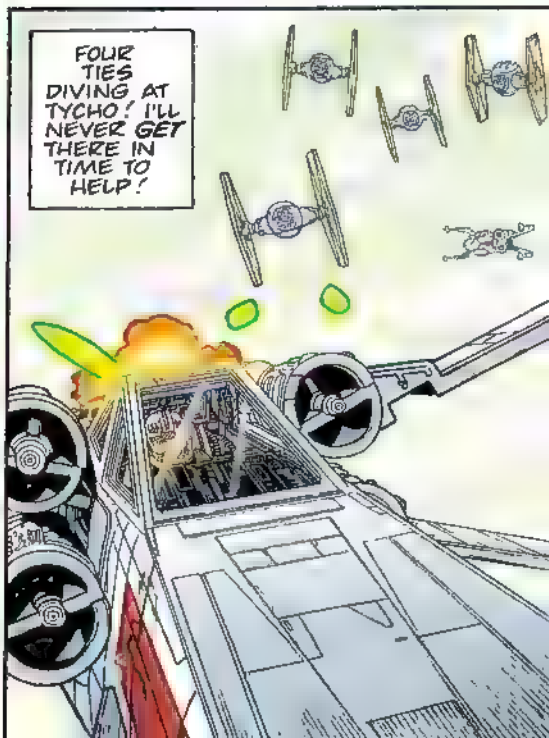

THIS'LL TEACH YOU TO GANG UP ON A ROGUE!

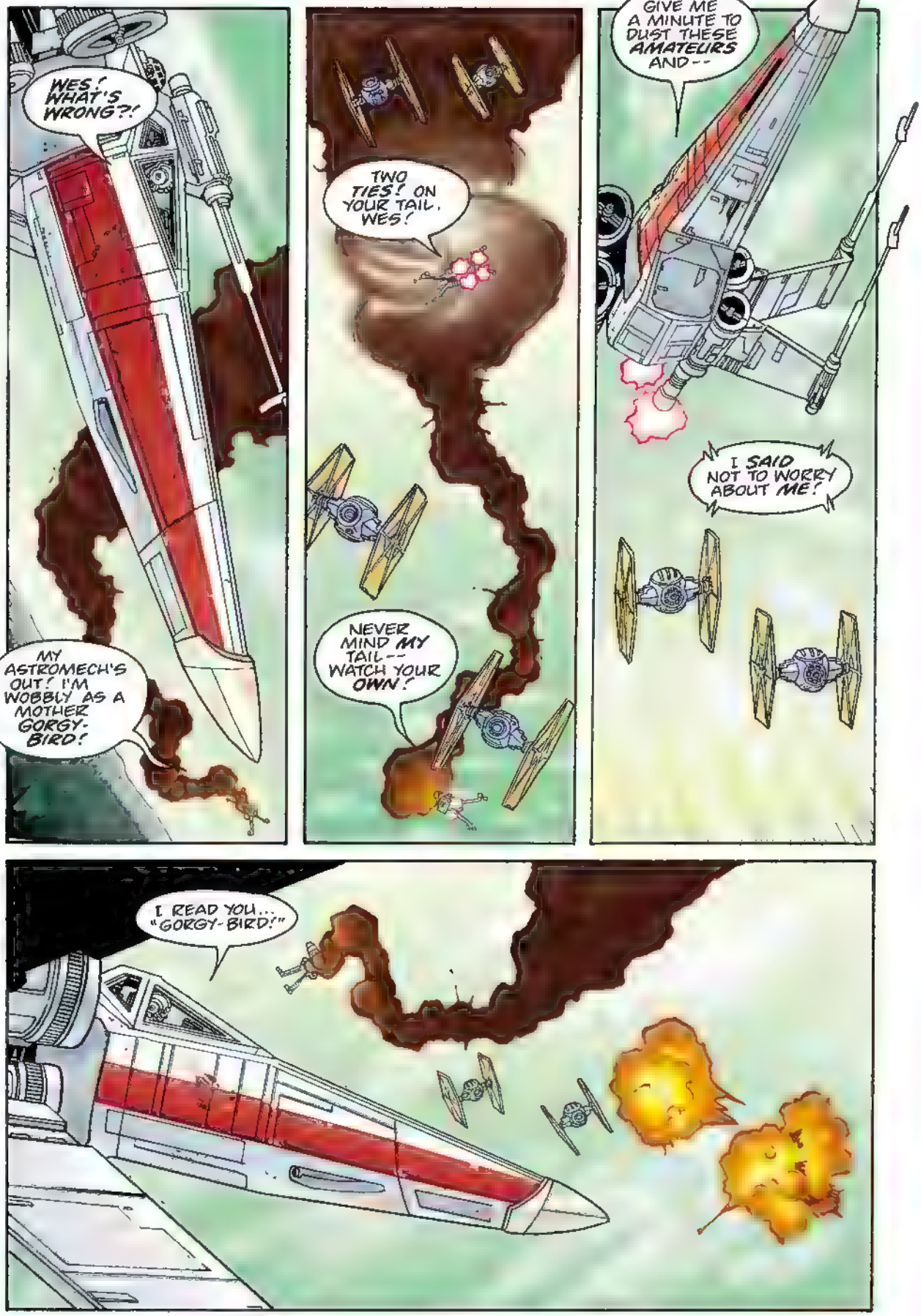

TYCHO! I'VE GOT TWO TIES AT SIX O' CLOCK! SHIFTING POWER TO REAR SHIELDS!


THREE SECONDS, CAPTAIN! TWO... ONE...!


ZERO! YOU'RE CLEAR!


THANKS, TYCHO! THAT EVENS THE ODDS!

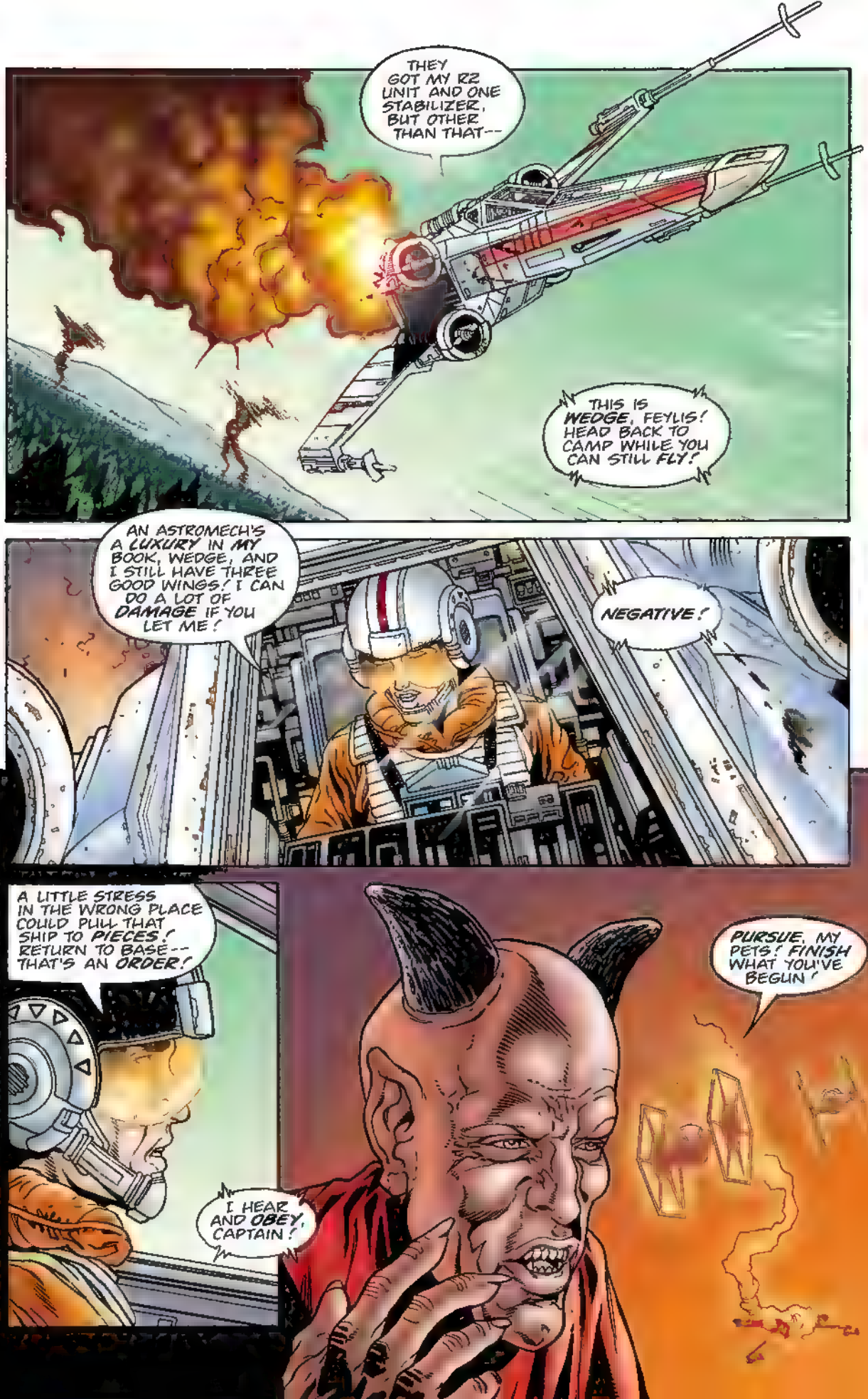

FOUR TIES DIVING AT TYCHO! I'LL NEVER GET THERE IN TIME TO HELP!


WES! WHAT'S WRONG?!
MY ASTROMECH'S OUT! I'M WOBBLY AS A MOTHER GORGY-BIRD!
TWO TIES! ON YOUR TAIL, WES!
NEVER MIND MY TAIL-- WATCH YOUR OWN!
GIVE ME A MINUTE TO DUST THESE AMATEURS AND--
I SAID NOT TO WORRY ABOUT ME!
I READ YOU... "GORGY-BIRD!"

THAT'S IT, MY PETS! DESCEND ON THE DISABLED SHIP! WEED OUT THE WOUNDED!
NRIN--WES IS IN TROUBLE! THOSE TIES WILL PICK HIM OFF LIKE--
NEVER MIND!
I SUGGEST YOU SELECT A VIABLE TARGET AND LET WES WORRY ABOUT WES!
KILL THE SMOKE, R5, AND LET'S FRY SOME EYEBALLS!

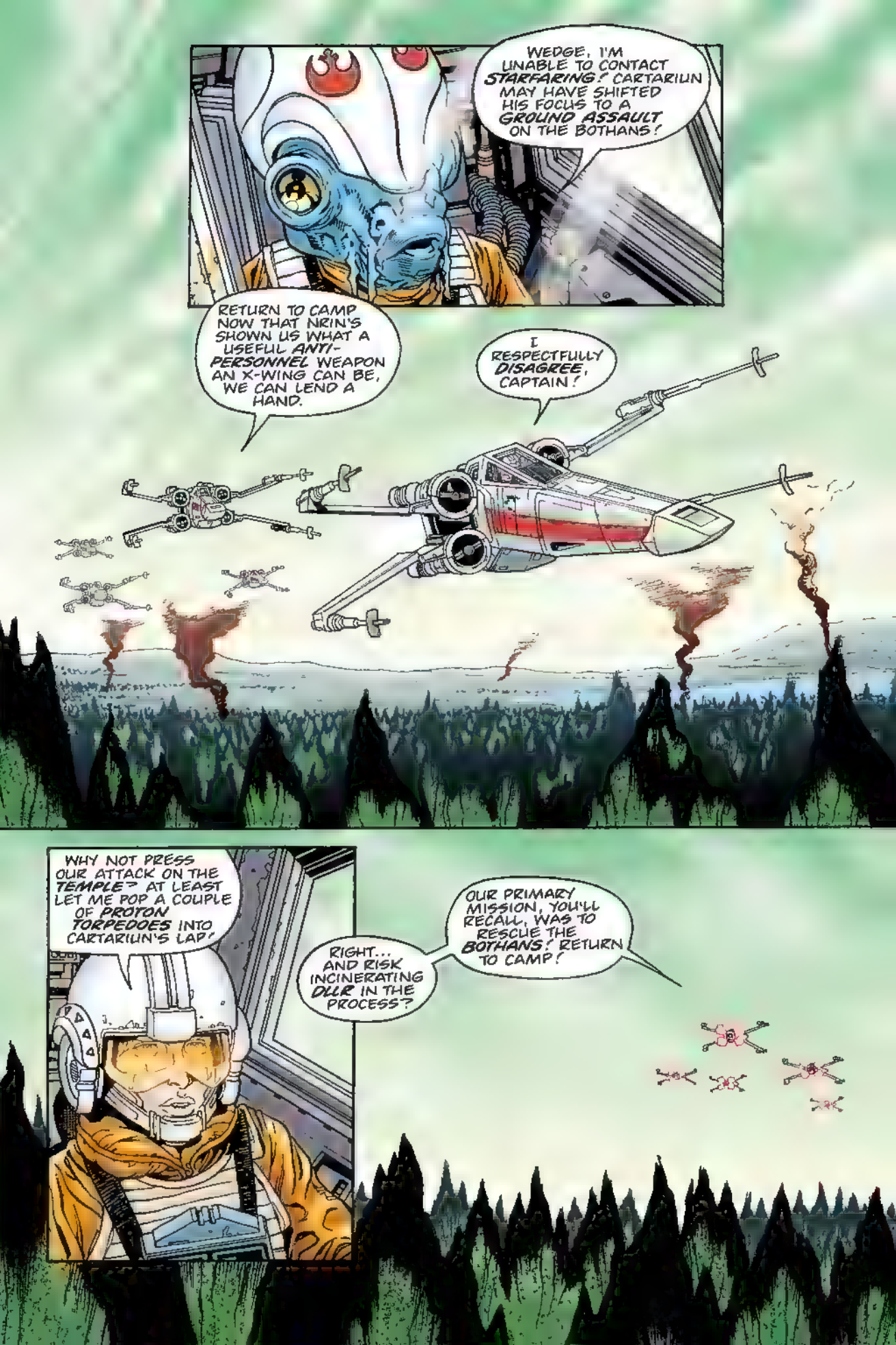
TWO TARGETS LOCKED!
HE WAS ONLY PRETENDING TO BE DISABLED!
YES, THE WAY A MOTHER GORGY-BIRD PRETENDS TO BE WOUNDED TO LURE PREDATORS AWAY FROM HER NEST!
IT PAYS TO STUDY ONE'S NATURAL HISTORY!
APPARENTLY CARTARIUN DOESN'T LIKE BEING DUPED! HERE COMES THE REST OF HIS FLEET!

IT'S LIKE SWATTING AT HORNETS! SO MANY OF THEM...!
I'M HIT!
WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED, FEYLIS! GET IT UNDER CONTROL!
I'M TRYING, IB!


THEY GOT MY R2 UNIT AND ONE STABILIZER, BUT OTHER THAN THAT--
THIS IS WEDGE, FEYLIS! HEAD BACK TO CAMP WHILE YOU CAN STILL FLY!
AN ASTROMECH'S A LUXURY IN MY BOOK, WEDGE, AND I STILL HAVE THREE GOOD WINGS! I CAN DO A LOT OF DAMAGE IF YOU LET ME!
NEGATIVE!
A LITTLE STRESS IN THE WRONG PLACE COULD PULL THAT SHIP TO PIECES! RETURN TO BASE-- THAT'S AN ORDER!
I HEAR AND OBEY, CAPTAIN!
PURSUE, MY PETS! FINISH WHAT YOU'VE BEGUN!

I HAVE TO TAP INTO THE SITH MAGIC... USE ITS POWER TO SAVE MYSELF!
BUT AM I SAVING MY BODY... AT THE COST OF MY SPIRIT?!
WAAAIIEEEE!
DISEMBOWEL THE PILOT QUIETLY, DAMN YOU! YOU'RE BREAKING MY CONCENTRATION!
I TOOK YOUR ADVICE, CARTARIUN! I EMBRACED THE MUSIC!
GGNNNN!
HAPPY?

LOOK OUT! THE TIES HAVE GONE CRAZY!
THE IRKS ARE FLYING LIKE... IRKS!
CARTARIUN MUST HAVE GOTTEN DISCONNECTED!
COULD IT BE OUR MISSING ROGUE IN ACTION?
LET'S HOPE SO, TYCHO!


WEDGE, I'M UNABLE TO CONTACT STARFARING! CARTARIUN MAY HAVE SHIFTED HIS FOCUS TO A GROUND ASSAULT ON THE BOTHANS!
RETURN TO CAMP NOW THAT NRIN'S SHOWN US WHAT A USEFUL ANTI-PERSONNEL WEAPON AN X-WING CAN BE, WE CAN LEND A HAND.
I RESPECTFULLY DISAGREE, CAPTAIN!
WHY NOT PRESS OUR ATTACK ON THE TEMPLE? AT LEAST LET ME POP A COUPLE OF PROTON TORPEDOES INTO CARTARIUN'S LAP!
RIGHT... AND RISK INCINERATING DLLR IN THE PROCESS?
OUR PRIMARY MISSION, YOU'LL RECALL, WAS TO RESCUE THE BOTHANS! RETURN TO CAMP!

YOU WERE RIGHT, CARTARIUN! THE POWER OF THIS PLACE IS INTOXICATING!
I COULD GROW QUITE ACCUSTOMED TO IT.
UGGHN!
I SEEM TO HAVE ARRIVED JUST IN TIME.

YOUR PATHETIC ATTACK ON ROGUE SQUADRON HAS *FAILED*. YOU HAVE THE *POWER*, BUT YOU LACK THE *TRAINING* TO USE IT EFFECTIVELY.

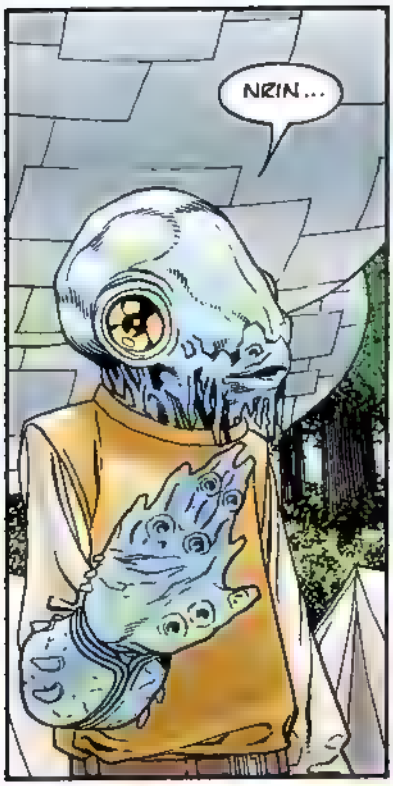
I, HOWEVER, AM ADEPT IN THE MEDITATIVE TECHNIQUE OF JESWANDI. IT IS AN ANCIENT ART AMONG BOTHANS.
ITS PRACTICE HAS TURNED THE TIDE OF MANY A BATTLE, AS IT SHALL DO HERE!
JESWANDI SHOWED ME THE POWER OF THIS PLACE. ALREADY I AM A GREATER MASTER THAN YOU!
THIS TEMPLE SHALL INDEED BE THE NUCLEUS OF A NEW EMPIRE! BUT IT WILL BE I, GIROV DZA'TEY, AT ITS HEAD... NOT SOME LOWLY DEVARONIAN TECH!

THEN LET ME (GASP) SERVE YOU, MY MASTER!
UNFORTUNATELY, YOU'VE TASTED THE POWER OF COMMAND. IN TIME, A SUBORDINATE POSITION WOULD BEGIN TO RANKLE, AND YOU WOULD BETRAY ME.
I WOULD HAVE TO WATCH MY BACK CONSTANTLY... MY SLEEP WOULD BE UNEASY! NO, I'M AFRAID THE SITUATION WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? MY HEAD... SUCH PRESSURE!
PITY. I WAS ONLY ENLARGING YOUR HEAD TO ACCOMMODATE YOUR EGO!
AS FOR YOU, ROGUE, I GIVE YOU JUST ENOUGH SITH ENERGY TO KEEP YOURSELF ALIVE, SO THAT YOU MAY WITNESS THE DEATH OF ROGUE SQUADRON!
DON'T... DO ME ANY FAVORS.

BELIEVE ME, IT'S MY *PLEASURE.*
WEDGE--I'VE BEEN TALKING WITH THE BOTHAN SECOND-IN-COMMAND! HE THINKS GIROV HAS *BETRAYED* US!
WHERE'S GIROV NOW?
HE TOOK A *SPEEDER BIKE* INTO THE FOREST AT THE START OF THE BATTLE AND HASN'T BEEN SEEN SINCE!
THE BOTHANS THINK HE'S BEEN *SEDUCED* BY THE DARK ENERGY OF THE TEMPLE! HE MAY EVEN HAVE COME HERE *LOOKING* FOR IT!

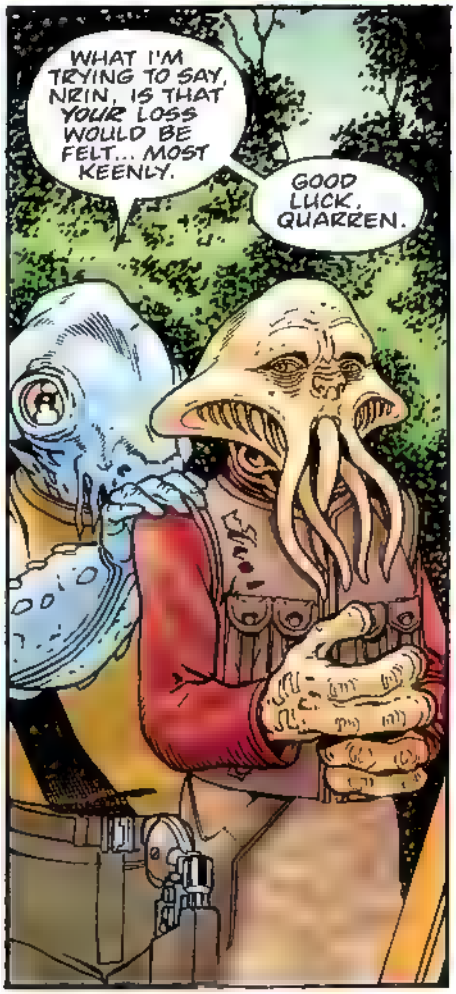
WHAT'S THE STATUS OF OUR TWO WOUNDED ROGUES?
HOBBIE'S LEG IS OKAY. HERIAN'S NOT SO GOOD.
SHE SUSTAINED A BRAIN INJURY IN THE EXPLOSION. THE BACTA'S DONE ALL IT CAN FOR HER. SHE NEEDS BETTER CARE THAN WE CAN GIVE HER HERE.
CAPTAIN ANTILLES... I HAVE TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT DLLR!
HE SUCCUMBED TO THE MUSIC OF THE TEMPLE. HE'S USING THE SITH MAGIC TO LINK OUR MINDS.
GIROV SHOT HIM FROM BEHIND, AND NOW HE'S DYING! HE...HE SENDS YOU A MESSAGE!
HE SAYS TO VAPE THE TEMPLE, CAPTAIN! REDUCING IT TO RUBBLE AND DUST IS THE ONLY WAY TO STOP THE EVIL!

SO THEY TOLD YOU ABOUT GIROV.
YES. NOW I NEED TO KNOW WHAT YOU PLAN TO DO ABOUT IT
YOU'RE WONDERING WHERE MY LOYALTIES LIE. WILL I FOLLOW MY COMMANDER INTO THE DARKNESS? OR JOIN YOU IN SEEKING OUT AND EXTERMINATING HIM?
MY GUT TELLS ME THAT YOU'RE AS ANXIOUS AS WE ARE TO DESTROY THE POWER OF THIS PLACE. YOU'VE SEEN ITS CORRUPTING EFFECT ON YOUR PEOPLE... ON YOUR OWN COMMANDER. YOU KNOW IT FOR WHAT IT IS.
I DO INDEED, CAPTAIN ANTILLES. YOU MAY COUNT ON MY FORCES TO LEAD AN EFFECTIVE GROUND ASSAULT.
AND MAY I SAY... TO CONFRONT ME IN MY OWN QUARTERS, ALONE AND UNARMED, YOU MUST PLACE GREAT FAITH IN THIS "GUT" OF YOURS.
NO, NOT SO MUCH.


NRIN...

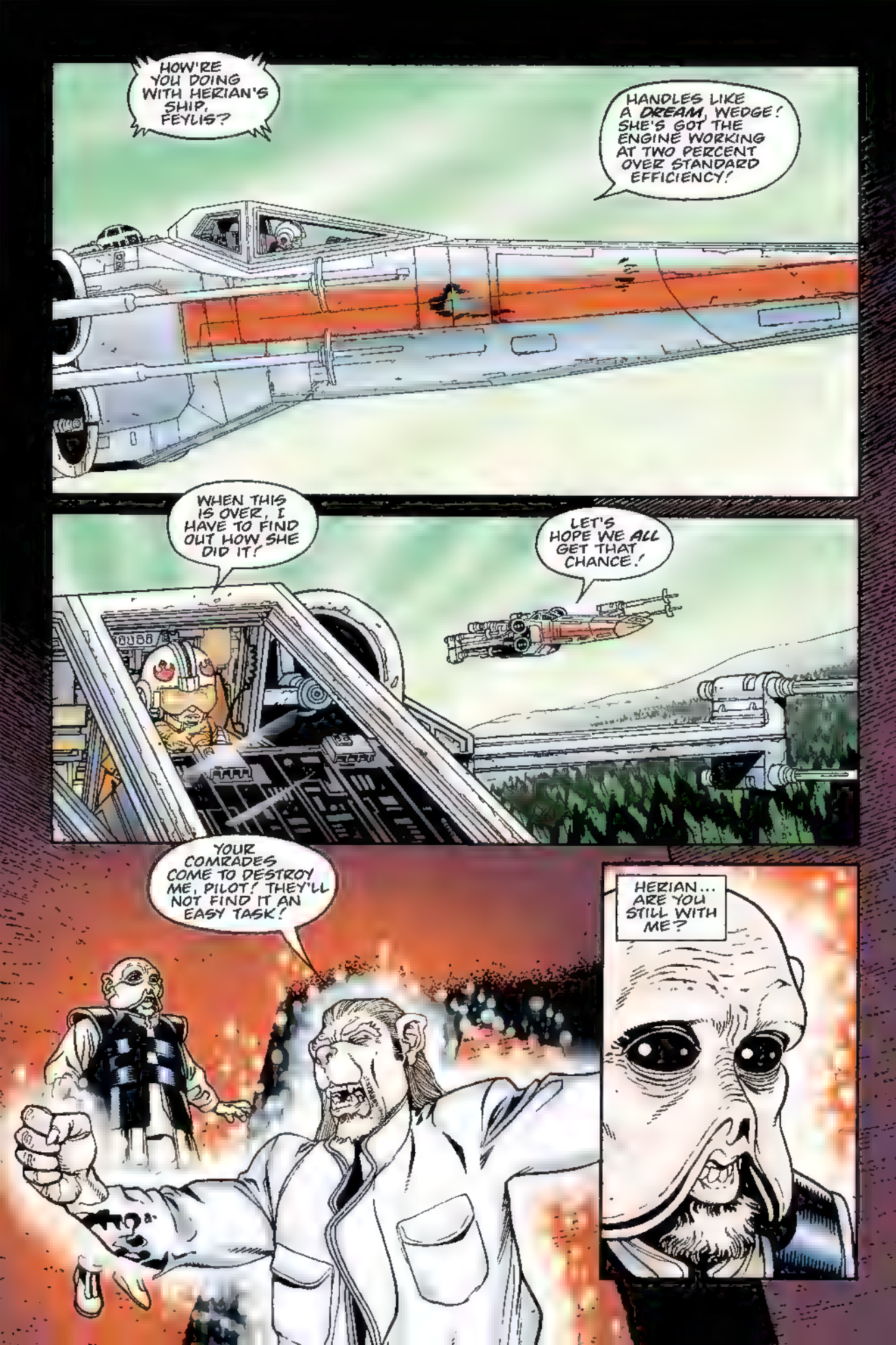
YES, IBTISAM?
CAPTAIN ANTILLES ANTICIPATES THAT THE ODDS WILL BE GREATLY AGAINST US IN THE COMING BATTLE.
AS THEY WERE IN THE LAST.

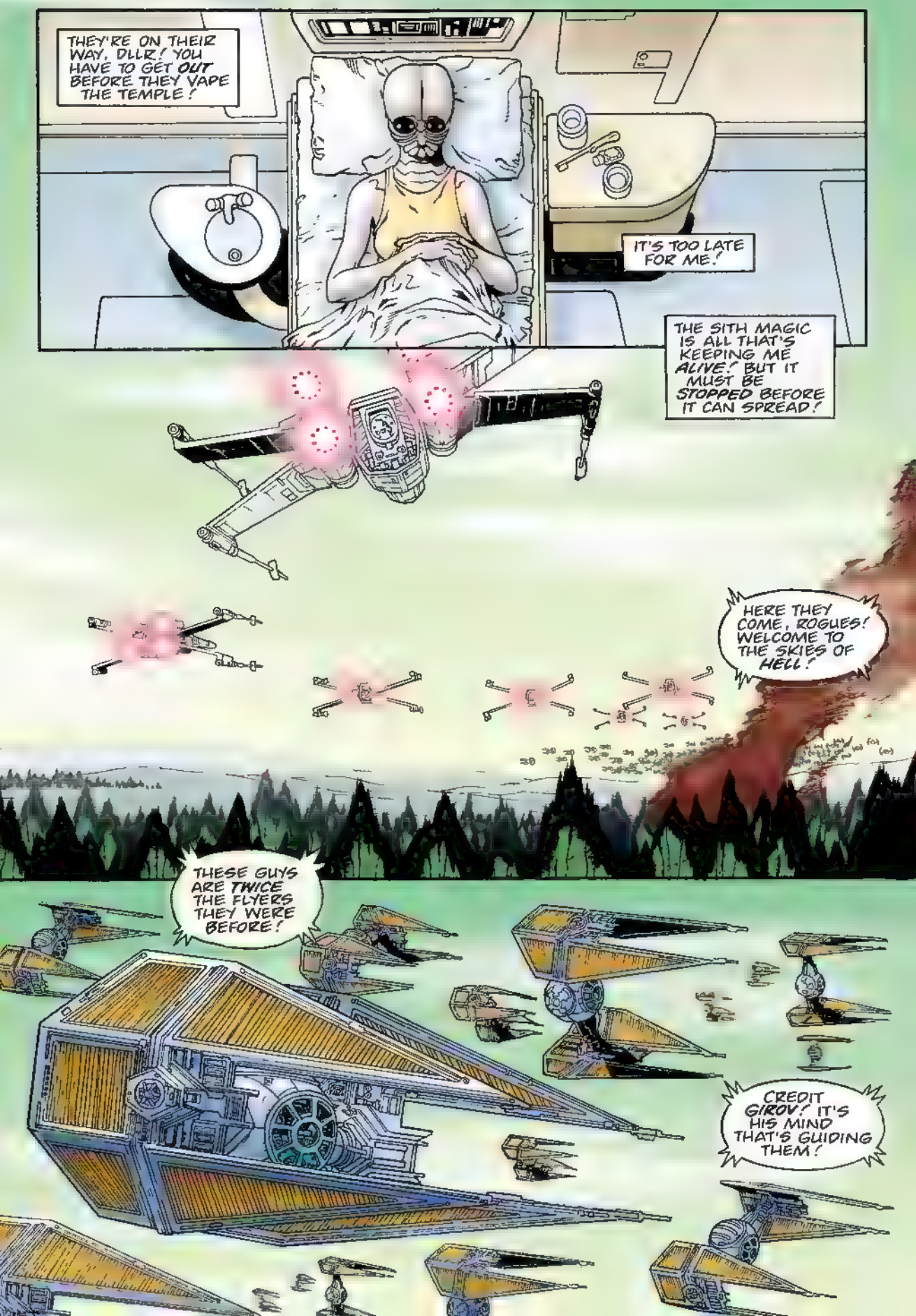
WORSE THAN THE LAST. HE SAYS THAT GIROV COMMANDS INTERCEPTORS... AND HIS TACTICAL KNOWLEDGE MAKES HIM A MUCH MORE FORMIDABLE FOE.
I OVERHEARD HIM TELL LIEUTENANT CELCHU TO EXPECT CASUALTIES.
IN WAR, IBTISAM, ONE ALWAYS EXPECTS CASUALTIES.

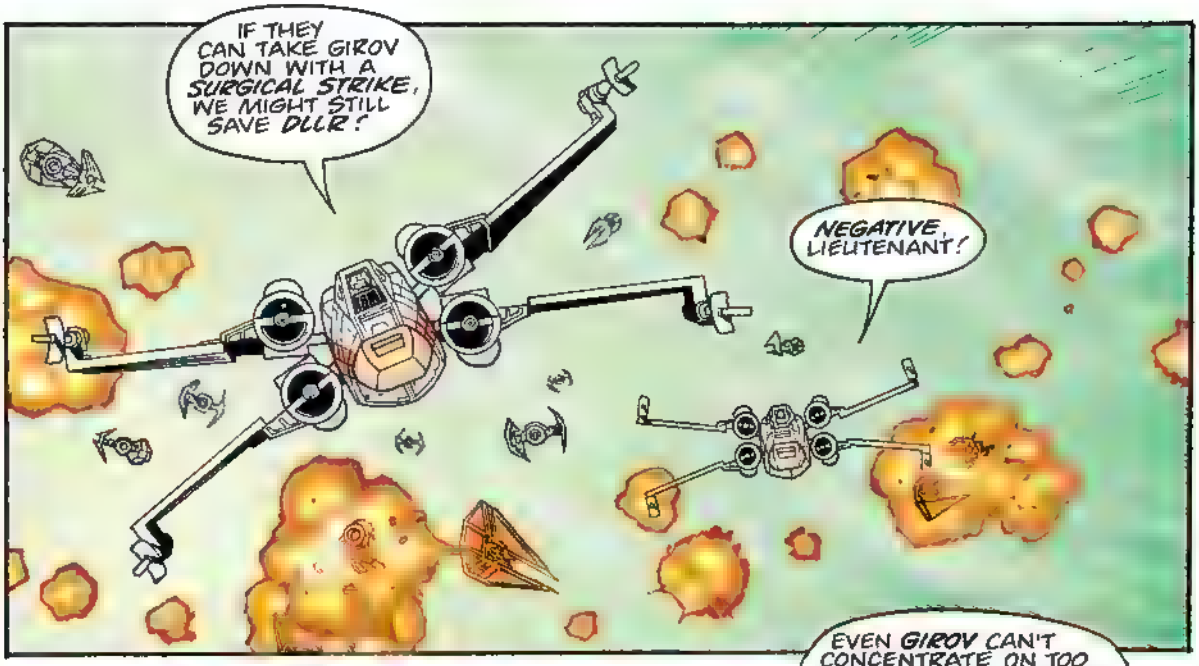

WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY, NRIN, IS THAT YOUR LOSS WOULD BE FELT... MOST KEENLY.
GOOD LUCK, QUARREN.

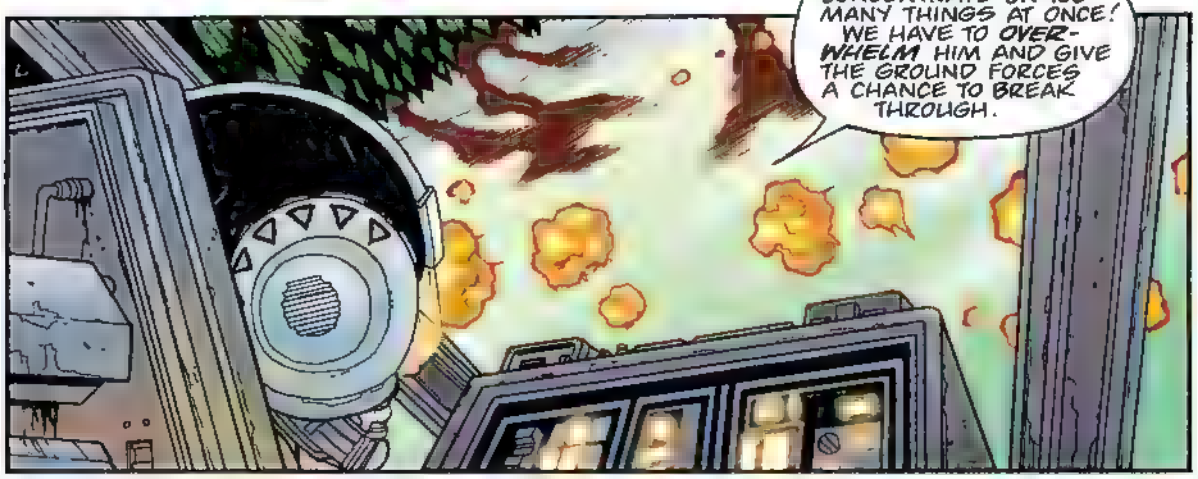
THE SAME TO YOU, CALAMARI.

IT'S TOO SOON TO BE USING THIS LEG, HOBBIE! YOU JUST CRAWLED OUT OF A BACTA TANK! YOU SHOULDN'T BE GOING INTO BATTLE!
THE ODDS WILL BE LONG ENOUGH, WES, WITHOUT AN ABLE-BODIED PILOT SNOOZING ON A COT IN SICKBAY!
YOU'RE A GOOD PILOT AND A DAMN FOOL, KLIVAN, AND WHAT'S MORE...
.. YOU NEED TO LAUNDER YOUR SOCKS.
THIS IS IT, ROGUES! OPERATION TEMPLE SMASH!
YOU HAVE A POET'S WAY WITH WORDS, CAPTAIN!


HOW'RE YOU DOING WITH HERIAN'S SHIP, FEYLIS?
HANDLES LIKE A DREAM, WEDGE! SHE'S GOT THE ENGINE WORKING AT TWO PERCENT OVER STANDARD EFFICIENCY!
WHEN THIS IS OVER, I HAVE TO FIND OUT HOW SHE DID IT!
LET'S HOPE WE ALL GET THAT CHANCE!
YOUR COMRADES COME TO DESTROY ME, PILOT! THEY'LL NOT FIND IT AN EASY TASK!
HERIAN... ARE YOU STILL WITH ME?


THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY, DLLR! YOU HAVE TO GET OUT BEFORE THEY VAPE THE TEMPLE!
IT'S TOO LATE FOR ME!
THE SITH MAGIC IS ALL THAT'S KEEPING ME ALIVE! BUT IT MUST BE STOPPED BEFORE IT CAN SPREAD!
HERE THEY COME, ROGUES! WELCOME TO THE SKIES OF HELL!
THESE GUYS ARE TWICE THE FLYERS THEY WERE BEFORE!
CREDIT GIROV! IT'S HIS MIND THAT'S GUIDING THEM!

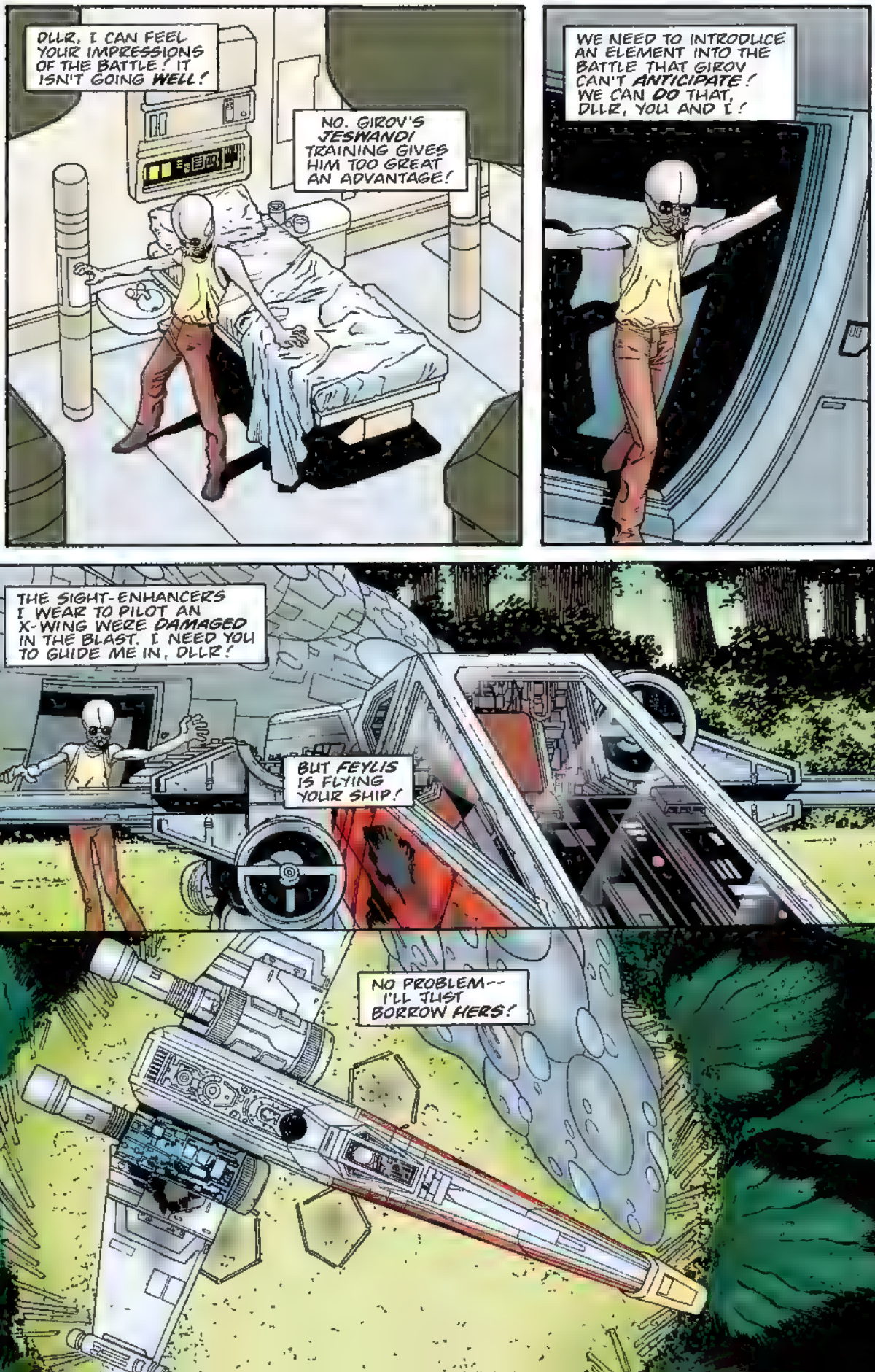

IF THEY CAN TAKE GIROV DOWN WITH A SURGICAL STRIKE, WE MIGHT STILL SAVE DLLR!
NEGATIVE, LIEUTENANT!

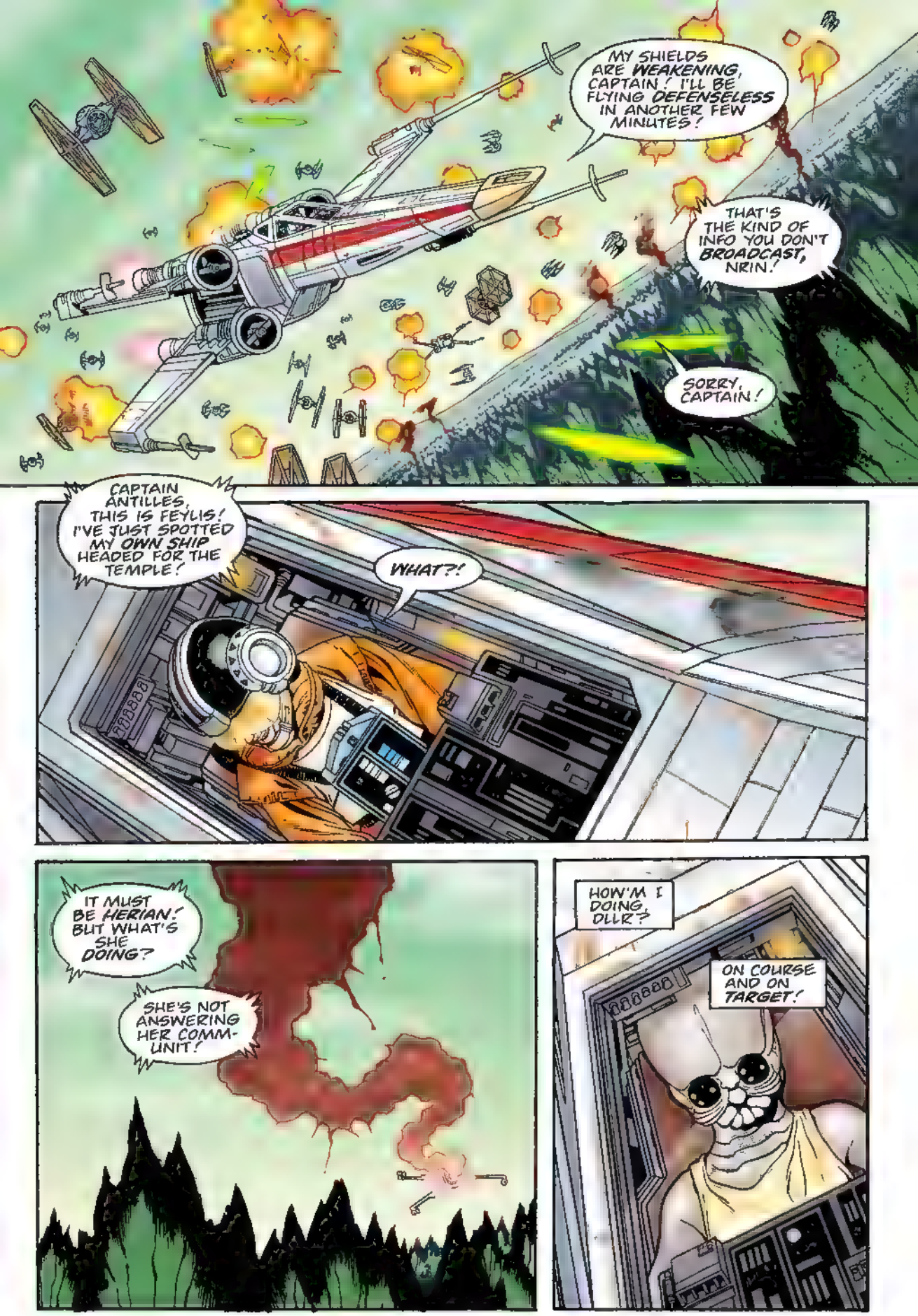

EVEN GIROV CAN'T CONCENTRATE ON TOO MANY THINGS AT ONCE! WE HAVE TO OVER-WHELM HIM AND GIVE THE GROUND FORCES A CHANCE TO BREAK THROUGH.

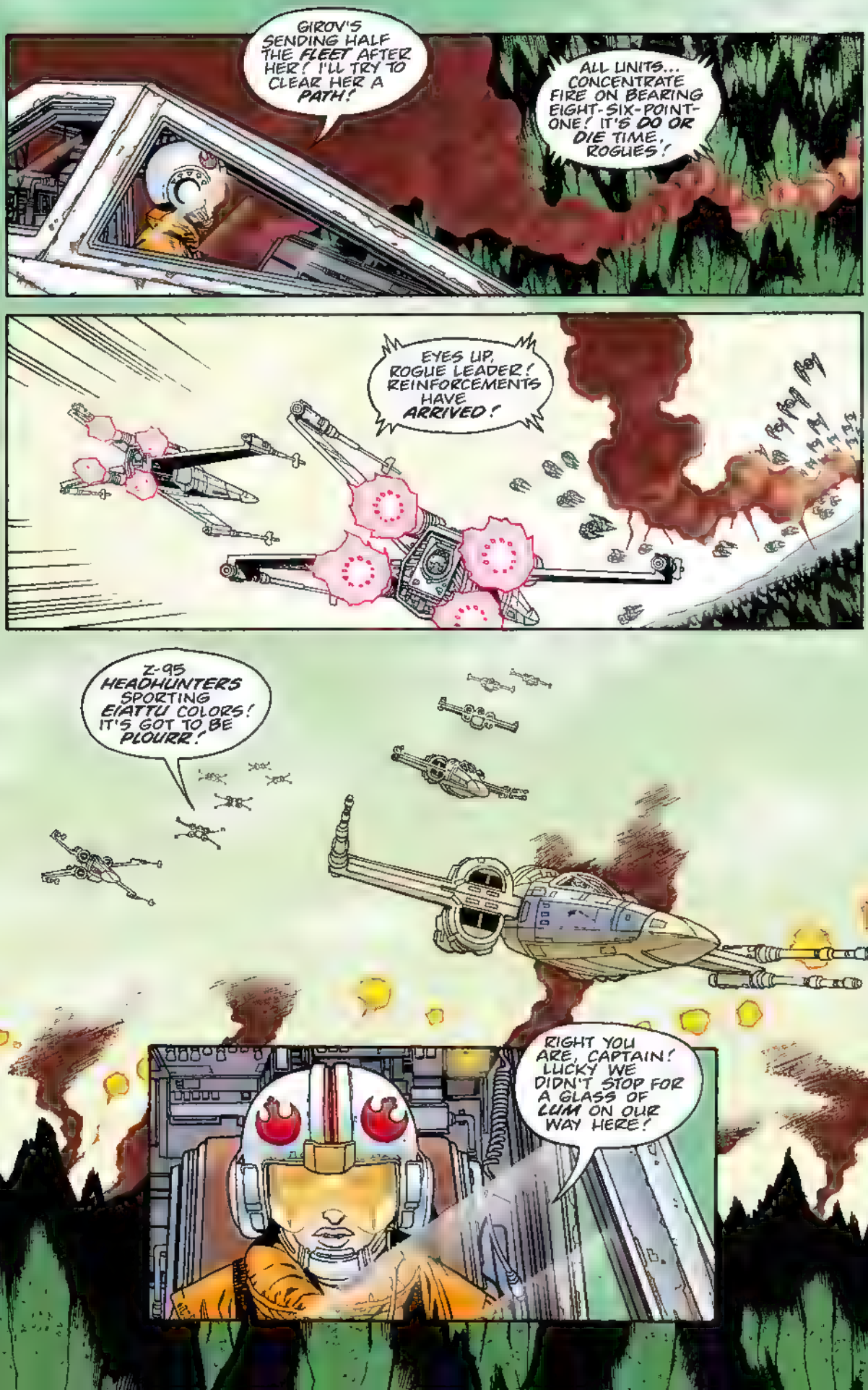
IF I COULD JUST GET A CLEAR PATH TO THE TEMPLE, I'D LOVE TO SPEND A COUPLE OF TORPS!

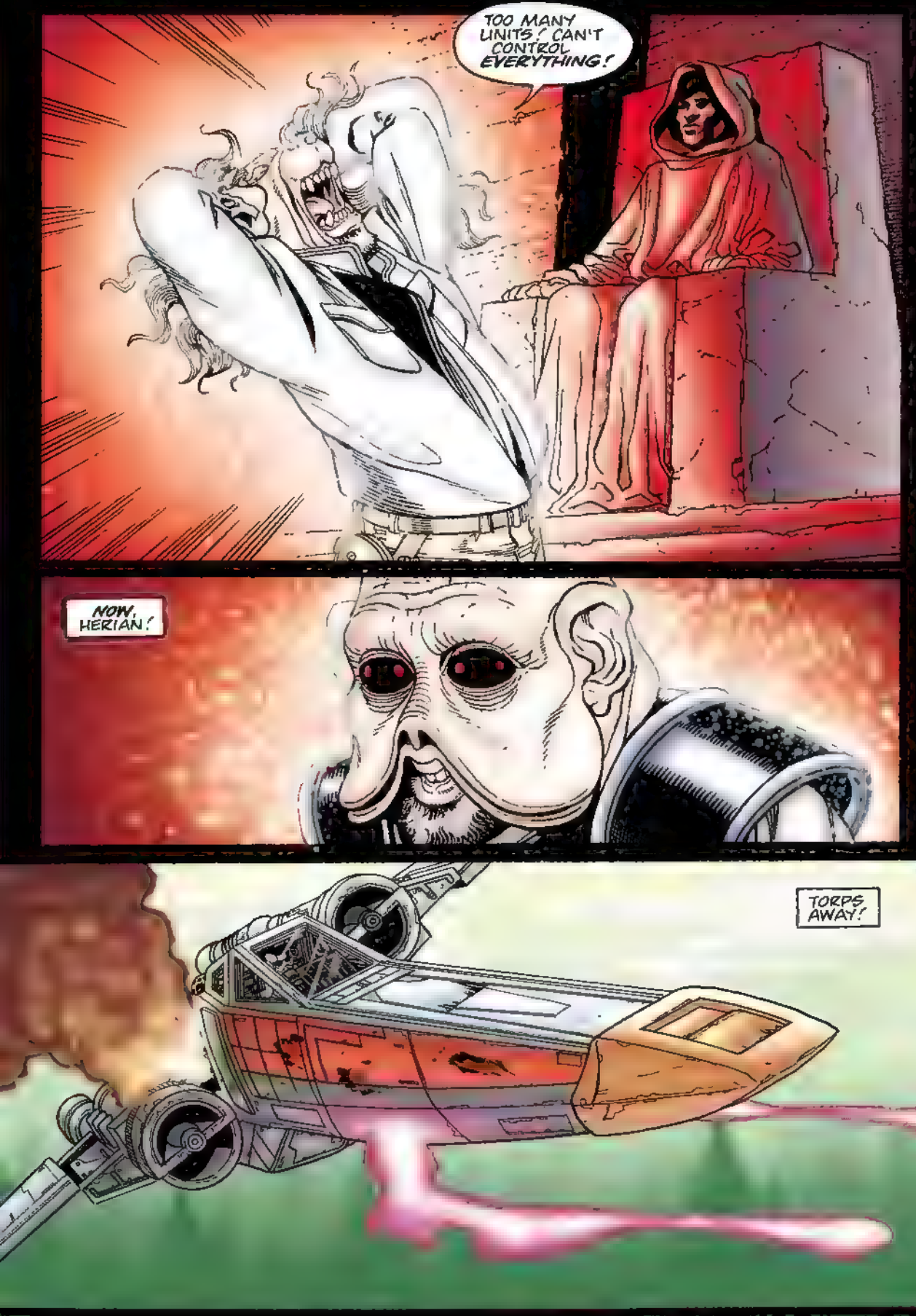
UGGNNN!

THE IRRUKIINE FIGHT LIKE DEMONS!
IT'S AS IF THEY ANTICIPATE OUR EVERY MOVE--OUR TACTICS--!
THEY DO! REMEMBER...OUR OWN COMMANDER CONTROLS THEIR ACTIONS!
THEN HOW DO WE STAND A CHANCE AGAINST THEM?
PERHAPS WE DON'T...
...BUT THAT'S NO EXCUSE FOR FAILING TO TRY!

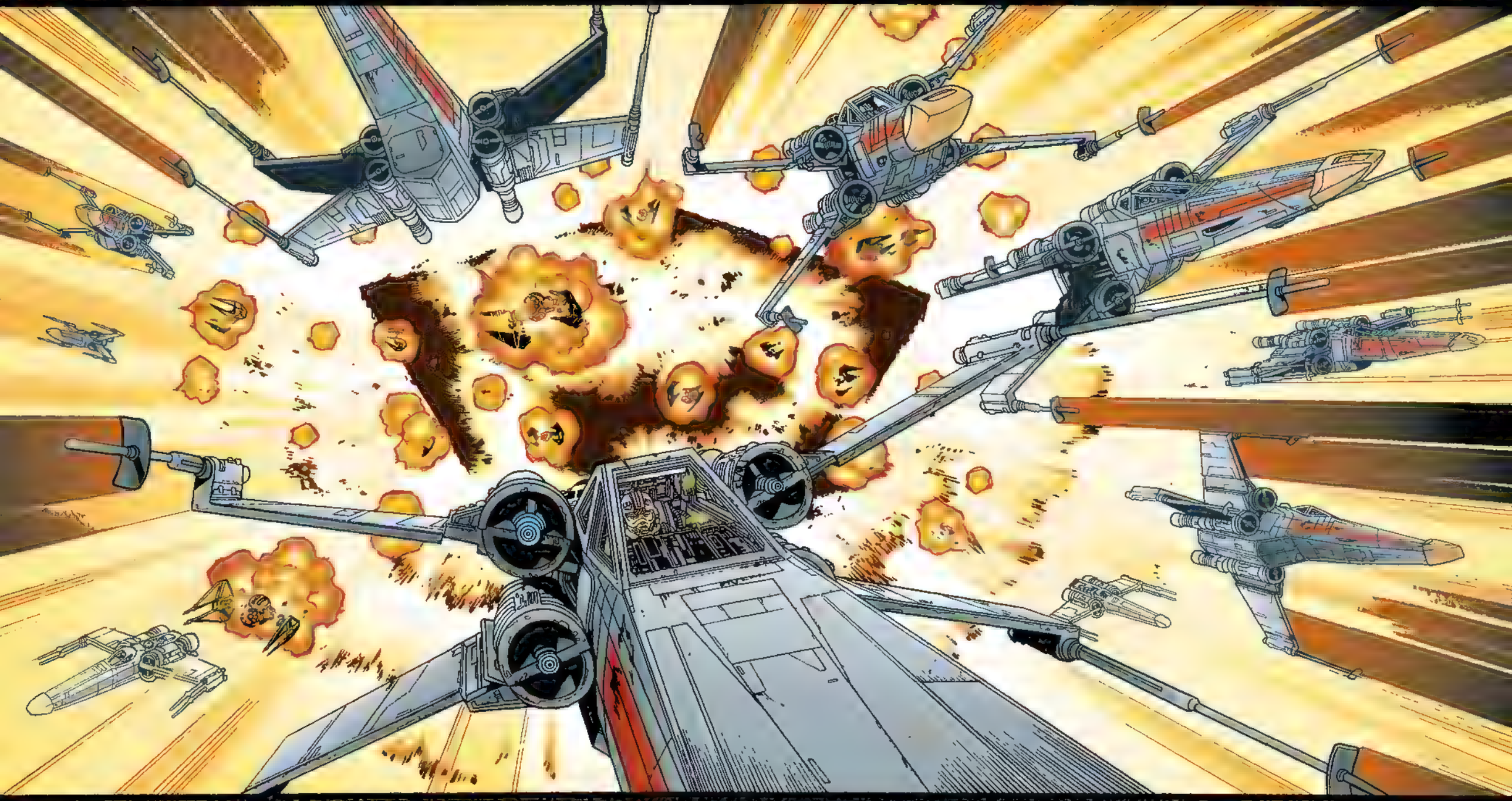

DLLR, I CAN FEEL YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF THE BATTLE! IT ISN'T GOING WELL!
NO. GIROV'S JESWANDI TRAINING GIVES HIM TOO GREAT AN ADVANTAGE!
WE NEED TO INTRODUCE AN ELEMENT INTO THE BATTLE THAT GIROV CAN'T ANTICIPATE! WE CAN DO THAT, DLLR, YOU AND I!
THE SIGHT-ENHANCERS I WEAR TO PILOT AN X-WING WERE DAMAGED IN THE BLAST. I NEED YOU TO GUIDE ME IN, DLLR!
BUT FEYLIS IS FLYING YOUR SHIP!
NO PROBLEM-- I'LL JUST BORROW HERS!


MY SHIELDS ARE WEAKENING, CAPTAIN! I'LL BE FLYING DEFENSELESS IN ANOTHER FEW MINUTES!
THAT'S THE KIND OF INFO YOU DON'T BROADCAST, NRIN!
SORRY, CAPTAIN!
CAPTAIN ANTILLES, THIS IS FEYLIS! I'VE JUST SPOTTED MY OWN SHIP HEADED FOR THE TEMPLE!
WHAT?!
IT MUST BE HERIAN! BUT WHAT'S SHE DOING?
SHE'S NOT ANSWERING HER COMM-UNIT!
HOW'M I DOING, DLLR?
ON COURSE AND ON TARGET!


GIROV'S SENDING HALF THE FLEET AFTER HER! I'LL TRY TO CLEAR HER A PATH!
ALL UNITS... CONCENTRATE FIRE ON BEARING EIGHT-SIX-POINT-ONE! IT'S DO OR DIE TIME, ROGUES!
EYES UP, ROGUE LEADER! REINFORCEMENTS HAVE ARRIVED!
Z-95 HEADHUNTERS SPORTING E'ATTU COLORS! IT'S GOT TO BE PLOURR!
RIGHT YOU ARE, CAPTAIN! LUCKY WE DIDN'T STOP FOR A GLASS OF LUM ON OUR WAY HERE!


TOO MANY UNITS! CAN'T CONTROL EVERYTHING!
NOW, HERIAN!
TORPS AWAY!

THE TORPS WEREN'T ENOUGH! I'M GOING IN, DLLR!
THERE'S ENOUGH FUEL AND WEAPONRY IN HERE TO BLOW UP A CITY! ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS TOUCH IT OFF!
YOU'VE GOT IT!
YOU'VE GOT IT! FANTASTIC JOB, HERIAN! ABSOLUTELY...
...FANT--!



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED, ROGUES.
BUT AT WHAT COST, CAPTAIN?
ONE THAT IS ALL TOO COMMON, FEYLIS... AND HARDER TO BEAR EACH TIME IT MUST BE PAID.
WITHOUT GIROV'S MIND TO GUIDE THEM, THE IRRUKIINE THREAT IS ENDED.
GATHER OUR DEAD AND RETURN TO CAMP. OUR WORK HERE IS DONE.

NOT TO SEEM UNGRATEFUL, PLOURR, BUT WHAT POSSESSED YOU TO COME AFTER US?
I TOLD MY HUSBAND THAT IF I HAD TO HOST ANOTHER DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION, I'D START A FIGHT AMONG THE DELEGATES JUST TO KEEP MYSELF AWAKE!
HE SAW THE WISDOM IN LETTING ME ESCAPE THE DUTIES OF OFFICE FOR A SHORT VACATION.
LUCKILY, I REMEMBERED YOUR THEORY ABOUT THE TRANSPOSED COORDINATES. THAT BROUGHT ME TO MALREV 4.
FROM THERE IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF SCANNING FOR ENERGY LEVELS, WHICH WERE CONVENIENTLY HIGH DURING THE BATTLE.
YOUR ARRIVAL COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE TIMELY. THANKS TO THE ADDED DISTRACTION, HERIAN WAS ABLE TO COMPLETE HER RUN ON THE TEMPLE.
SHE AND DLLR WILLINGLY GAVE UP THEIR LIVES FOR THE ALLIANCE.
IT'S A PAINFUL TRUTH, BUT SOMETIMES THE ONLY WAY EVIL CAN BE DEFEATED IS BY THE SELFLESS, SACRIFICIAL EFFORTS OF GOOD PEOPLE.
WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT, WHEN OUR TIME COMES, THE CAUSE IS AS NOBLE, AND THE NEED AS GREAT.

THE END.

A Word About the Omnibus Collections

Dark Horse Comics' *Star Wars* Omnibus Collections were created as a way to showcase actual novel-length stories or series, and to provide homes for "orphaned" series, single-issue stories, and short stories which would otherwise never be collected, or which might fall out of print.

STAR WARS®

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